



ACADEMY for the ARTS

Student Handbook 2025-26



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Welcome Message & Student Covenant



Rob Sine

DIRECTOR

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Welcome to the Academy for the Arts!

We are absolutely thrilled to welcome you to our creative community—a place where passion, imagination, and talent come together to shape a brighter, more beautiful world.

Music and the arts are more than just expressions—they are vital threads in the fabric of our culture and community. They inspire change, bring people together, and remind us of our shared humanity. By choosing to pursue the arts, you are not only nurturing your own gifts—you are helping to uplift others, spark joy, and make the world a more vibrant and meaningful place.

We believe in your potential, and we're honored to support you on this journey. Welcome to the Academy for the Arts.

Let's make something beautiful—together.

Rob Sine



Student Covenant

As a student of the Academy for the Arts, I agree to:

- Be on time for my lessons.
- Obey the rules of AFTA.
- Behave appropriately while at AFTA.
- Sign in/sign out at the reception desk and wait quietly for my lessons.
- Bring any needed instruments and materials.
- Practice on my own between lessons.
- Participate in an end of term recital (required for school-age students only).

Our History

The Academy for the Arts opened its doors to the community on August 18, 2014. We are still as motivated by our mission and core values as we were on that first day. At AFTA, we offer the best in teaching, in facility, and in performance opportunity. We seek to empower students of all ages and backgrounds in reaching their greatest potential both as artists and as human beings. A wonderfully diverse community, our students achieve musical success, are actively engaged, and are open to new and exciting experiences. Our highly-skilled faculty create an atmosphere of nurture and expectation in which students pursue excellence through their music. We have wonderful families and volunteers that support in such a beautiful way. As we look back on past years of tremendous growth and achievements with pride, we feel confident that AFTA will continue to write new chapters of excellence, innovation, and creativity. We are excited about the journey! This is our story and the story continues...

Our Mission

The Academy for the Arts at First Baptist Church of Asheville seeks to empower students of all ages and backgrounds in reaching their greatest potential both as artists and as human beings. Our highly-skilled teachers create an atmosphere of nurture and expectation in which students pursue excellence in their artistic crafts, developing mature and disciplined character. Believing that artistic inspiration and talents are gifts that need to be shared in order to be fully realized; we offer regular and exciting opportunities for individual and group performance.

Our Core Values

Human Development: The arts are an essential expression of divine and human creativity; therefore, growth in artistic ability expands a person's capacity to experience the sacred dimensions of life, to discover more of one's own talents and skills, and to give gifts of beauty and meaning to the world. As other opportunities for learning artistic crafts diminish or disappear, we offer our community the resources and experiences which will cause both the arts and persons to thrive.

Community: The arts have a nearly-unique power to connect people across differences and diversities of every kind. The experiences of learning, performing, and enjoying artistic crafts offer people the opportunity to know, to encourage, and to value one another on the common ground of aesthetic excellence. We offer such common ground to our community.

Church as "Patron" of the Arts: Historically, the church and other faith-communities have inspired, provided for, and offered material, emotional, and spiritual support for the arts and artists. We are reclaiming the role of patron, or sponsor, of the arts as a way of serving God and our neighbors through the nurture of artists who will fashion beauty and, thereby, glorify God who is its source.

Program Fee

The program fee, due at the beginning of each term, helps to cover costs associated with accompanists, administration, masterclasses, recitals, and receptions. The program fee, and all other fees, are non-refundable.

\$50: Single Fall or Spring Term, Individual Student

\$95: Combined Fall & Spring Terms, Individual Student

\$90: Single Fall or Spring Term, Family (2+ Students)

\$175: Combined Fall & Spring Terms, Family (2+ Students)

Fall and Spring Terms – Mid-August through May

Tuition and fees must be paid before students begin a lesson, class, or ensemble. All fees are non-refundable. Tuition can be paid for the whole semester or on a monthly basis. Students may choose from two payment plans for the Fall and Spring terms:

1. Paid in full by the start of each term using cash, check, or PayPal.
2. Monthly installments using cash, check, or PayPal.

Students enrolling after the start of a term are eligible for pro-rated tuition, based on the start date of lessons. Recital Week is part of payable tuition and fees. [Click here for Recital Week dates.](#)

Recital Week is part of payable tuition and fees; however, recitals take the place of lessons. Any lesson taught during recital season is considered a makeup lesson.

Music Lesson Rates

Private Instruction

We offer 30-, 45-, and 60-minute lessons. Due to variance in the number of lessons per term, please contact AFTA for specific tuition costs for a full semester.

30 minutes: \$36.00/lesson

45 minutes: \$54.00/lesson

60 minutes: \$72.00/lesson

Audition Preparation Package

In addition to private lessons, AFTA offers an audition preparation package, designed to prepare students for honor ensemble or school/community musical theatre auditions. The package includes four 30-, 45-, or 60-minute private lessons for four consecutive weeks. No program fee required, but payment is required in full at the time of registration. Lesson rates above apply.

Group Instruction

Pricing for group instruction is available upon request. Contact AFTA for questions regarding specific groups and classes.

Additional Fees

Students may need to purchase music or supplies at the recommendation of individual teachers. All fees are non-refundable.



Late Payments

The Academy for the Arts reserves the right to charge a \$15 late fee if tuition payment is not received by the 1st of the month, or adjusted due date listed on the invoice. AFTA also reserves the right to cancel and/or deny lessons for payments not received.

Monthly Installments

Payment for each installment is due by the 1st of each month in a term, or adjusted due date listed on the invoice, regardless of when lessons are held. Contact the Academy office for specific questions regarding installment plans.

Summer Payment

The summer program fee and tuition must be paid in full at the time of registration.

Suspension of Instruction

AFTA reserves the right to suspend instruction when students do not meet their financial obligations. Students are still liable for the full cost of instruction. Tuition credit or makeup lessons are not given as a result of lessons missed due to suspension.



Private Lessons

Student Absences

Students are expected to attend regularly scheduled lessons. One absence per semester will be given a makeup lesson provided a 24-hour notice is given to the teacher and/or AFTA by email or phone call. Students are charged ahead of time for all the lessons for which they register. ***Canceling a lesson with the expectation of payment credit is not an option.***

In addition to the one make-up lesson per semester allotment, absences for extreme emergencies or death in the family can be made up according to the discretion of the instructor. If a student commits to a rescheduled lesson and is absent for any reason, the lesson will be forfeited and not rescheduled by the instructor.

If a lesson is canceled or forfeited by a student for any reason, the instructor may schedule another lesson in the absentee time slot. The instructor is under no obligation to notify the parent or student who forfeits the lesson of the substitution. If the original student's schedule changes and they are able to attend the canceled lesson, it is subject to the instructor's schedule.

It is important that students be on time for lessons. Students who are 10 minutes (or more) late for their lesson will be considered to have forfeited their lesson. This will be considered an unexcused absence and the instructor is under no obligation to make it up. If running late close to lesson time, please call the Academy for the Arts while in transit. Communication is of the utmost importance.

Teacher Absences

If the teacher is to be absent without a substitute, the student will be notified ahead of time and the lesson will be rescheduled at a mutually convenient time at no additional cost to the student. Students are charged for all the lessons for which they register, including those missed by teachers. Lessons not completed by the end of the semester due to teacher absence will be credited to the student.



Termination, Grievance, Cancellation, & Closures



Inclement Weather

If the Academy closes due to weather, lessons will be rescheduled at no additional cost to the student. The Academy will make a decision by 9am on the day of lessons and it will be emailed, posted on Facebook, Instagram, and listed on WLOS.

Lesson Termination & Grievance

If a student wishes to discontinue lessons, a 30-day written notice will be required. The student will be financially responsible for the lessons which occur during those 30 days, whether or not the student chooses to attend the lessons. A refund will be given for any remaining balance after the 30 days. The program fee is non-refundable.

Program Cancellation

AFTA reserves the right to cancel classes or ensembles with insufficient enrollment. Classes or ensembles that do not meet minimum enrollment 24 hours before the first lessons may be canceled. If a class is canceled, students will be notified and given the opportunity to transfer to another class. If students do not enroll in another class, a full refund will be issued.

AFTA Closures For Lessons

The Academy for the Arts is closed for lessons on the following days:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (3rd Monday in January)
- Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)
- Independence Day Week
- Two Weeks between Summer 2 Session and Fall Semester
- Labor Day (1st Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Holiday (4th Thursday in November and Friday after)
- Two Weeks between Fall and Spring Semesters



Scholarships

The vision of the Academy for the Arts is to provide quality arts education to students. The AFTA Scholarship Fund was conceived to give opportunity for arts education to students for whom it would otherwise be financially unfeasible. Students must show a commitment to the study of his or her discipline and be able to show financial need.

Requirements

[Scholarship Application Link](#)

Requirements for Consideration:

Applicant must:

- Be in grades K – 12.
- Commit to one full term of lessons at AFTA.
- Demonstrate a passion for his or her area of study.
- Own instrument needed or have access to an instrument.
- Maintain regular attendance and follow all AFTA policies.*

*Excessive absences may result in the forfeit of the scholarship.

Please complete all sections of the form and email, fax, or mail it to the address on the form. Have all application materials postmarked by the following deadlines:

Fall Term Deadline: July 1

Spring Term Deadline: November 1

Late applications will be considered only after all other applications have been processed.

*Notice to applicants for Fall Semester: If all requirements continue to be met and subject to the availability of scholarship funds, your scholarship may be automatically renewed for the following Spring Semester. All applicants must reapply for the next academic year. Scholarships may be revoked if requirements are not met.

**Notice to all applicants: Scholarships will be automatically extended through the Summer Term based on available funds. Please note that summer scholarships may not be the same as previous Fall/Spring Semesters.



Termination, Grievance, Cancellation, & Closures



Student Recitals

School-Age Students

Recitals will be given two times per year: once in December and once in May.

At the Academy for the Arts, we consider recital performance an essential element in the development of our talent. The recital is also a wonderful opportunity for friends and family to celebrate what the students have learned, and an affirming time for the students themselves.

For these reasons, student participation in the recital is a requirement for the overall artistic experience. The student prepares a specific piece(s) assigned by their teacher, to be performed from memory. The recital date is posted at the beginning of the term to give family and friends plenty of time to calendar the event. There are no excused absences, and failure to participate will jeopardize the student's continuation at AFTA.

Adult Students

Adult Share Recitals are also offered twice a year: once in December and once in May. Participation is strongly encouraged, but not required. If you would like to participate in recital, please notify your teacher.

Practice

Regular practice is an essential element in refining musical and artistic talents. In order to receive the full benefit of instruction, the student is expected to practice daily the same amount as the lesson time. For example, if a student has a 30-minute lesson, then they should practice a minimum of 30 minutes each day.

Practice Hints for Parents

- Sit down with your child and look at his/her schedule. Choose a set time every day for practice. Encourage students to honor this time.
- Provide a practice setting free of distractions such as TV, phone, personal electronics, or interruptions from siblings.
- Check your child's assignment log at the beginning of the week to see the teacher's comments and assignments for the week.
- Check on your child's progress throughout the week. Make sure he/she has accurately recorded the amount of practice time each day.
- Make sure your child finishes any written assignments and is prepared for each lesson/class.
- Teachers will make practice recommendations based on the individual student's needs.

