Incoming Musicians!

Dear parents of incoming musicians,

Welcome to Blair Academy! My name is Jennifer Pagotto, and I am the school's director of instrumental music. I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about our program and to encourage your son or daughter to join one of the instrumental ensembles.

We have two major ensembles at Blair: the Symphony Orchestra and the Jazz Ensemble. These groups embrace students with at least three years of experience playing an instrument. All of the ensembles meet during the academic day and there is no conflict with sports or other after-school activities. Along with Jazz Ensemble, the groups meet for rehearsal three times per week and they are all full-year courses. The ensembles give at least three major concerts per year in addition to off-campus trips and performances. Some vespers services and open houses may also be included. Our music is chosen from the standard orchestral, wind and jazz repertoire, and all of our groups perform at a very high level.

We also have a strong private lesson program at Blair. Students joining the Symphony Orchestra or Jazz Ensemble are strongly encouraged to take private lessons to further enhance their technique and ability with their instrument. These lessons meet once a week during the academic day with teachers from Blair Academy and the surrounding area, and this continued and focused instruction benefits both the student and the group. You may visit our website over the summer for a list of the private teachers.

Included in this packet are two forms: one to register for the instrumental ensembles and one to register for private lessons. Please return the registration forms as soon as possible (but no later than June 16) so that I may begin planning for the size and instrumentation of each ensemble and begin choosing music for next year's concerts. Should you have any questions about the instrumental program at Blair, I would be happy to speak with you. Please feel free to call me at (908) 362-6121, ext. 5678, or e-mail me at pagotj@blair.edu. I hope your child decides to join one of our ensembles this year, and I look forward to speaking with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pagotto
Director of Instrumental Music

Instrumental Ensemble Registration

As the director of instrumental music at Blair Academy, I want to welcome new and returning students to Blair for the 2023-2024 school year. Blair offers two year-long classes for instrumentalists: *Symphony Orchestra* for string, wind, brass and percussion players; and *Jazz Ensemble* for those who play piano, guitar, bass, wind, brass or percussion instruments. In the past, we have also had various chamber ensembles on a term-by-term basis when there was sufficient demand.

Please return the bottom portion of this form indicating which instrument or instruments you play and your years of experience. We are looking for participants on all instruments.

The School also offers a program of private music lessons, and a separate form, "Private Music Lessons," is enclosed. These lessons are strongly encouraged for members of any ensemble.

If you have any questions or concerns, or are in need of additional information, please call me at (908) 362-6121 ext. 5678, or email me at pagotj@blair.edu. Completing the lower portion of this letter will help to provide for your needs and interests next year and in the future. Please return this letter by June 16th to help make music available in your schedule of classes. I look forward to working with you this year!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pagotto
Director of Instrumental Music

Name_____ Grade level this fall _____

Home phone_____ Email address_____

Please check the following that apply to you.

_____ Please enroll me in Symphony Orchestra.

_____ Please enroll me in Jazz Ensemble and Orchestra.
(For all wind, brass, piano and percussion players interested in both Symphony Orchestra and Jazz Ensemble)

_____ Please enroll me in Jazz Ensemble. (For guitar and bass players only)

_____ I have experience playing this/these instrument(s): _____
Number of years studied: _____

_____ I will bring my own instrument.

_____ I will need to rent or borrow an instrument.

Private Music & Dance Lessons

Private lessons are offered throughout the school year for instruments, voice and dance. Lessons are offered in the first semester (a set of 10 lessons for $600 or *$650 for violin and piano*) and the second semester (a set of 15 lessons for $900 or *$975 for violin and piano*). Instrument rental is available through the department for students who cannot supply their own. In the case of piano, a single fee of $30.00 or $45.00 is charged for use of the School's instruments, depending on semester.

Students meet for lessons weekly during the school day, according to their schedule and the teacher's availability. All students are to maintain regular practice schedules, be prompt for lessons, and inform Mrs. Pagotto or their private lessons teacher of potential absences by 6:00 p.m. the evening before.

The first set of lessons runs from the second week of school through the beginning of December. The second set of lessons runs from January through the end of the year. There are no "carryovers" of lessons from one semester to the other, except in the case of extended illness. After the second lesson, there can be no refunds for the remainder of the semester's lessons. In the case of extended illness, lessons may be made up by mutual agreement between the instructor and student. While instructors have some flexibility in their schedules, they are under no obligation to make up multiple unexcused absences. ***A reminder: If a student is going to miss a lesson, Mrs. Pagotto or the private lesson teacher must be informed no later than 6:00 p.m. the day before the lesson. Mrs. Pagotto can be reached at ext. 5678 or email at pagotj@blair.edu. The private lesson teacher will supply the student with his/her phone number and email address at the first lesson.***

We encourage students to enroll for the year, although they may opt not to continue at the close of the first semester. Students **must** notify the director of instrumental music two weeks before the end of the first semester if they do not plan to continue, **and must file an official drop form signed by their monitor**. Lessons are to be paid for in advance (checks may be made payable to Blair Academy).
As described in detail in the "fine and performing arts" section of the course catalog, a full school year of lessons may be substituted for one performing art course—though the lessons carry no academic credit. This option is limited to the junior/senior section of the art requirement AND is available only to four-year students.

Lessons are available for—but not limited to:

VOICE	PIANO	FLUTE	TRUMPET
GUITAR	VIOLIN	OBOE	FRENCH HORN
ELECTRIC BASS	VIOLA	CLARINET	TROMBONE
PERCUSSION	VIOLINCELLO	SAXOPHONE	EUPHONIUM
DANCE	DOUBLE BASS	BASSOON	TUBA

CONTRACT FOR PRIVATE INSTRUCTION

Please enroll _____ (print student name) Grade level_____

for lessons in _____ (print instrument).

For the 10 lessons in the first semester, I agree to pay $600 or $650 for violin or piano lessons, and, if applicable**,** an additional $30.00 for the use of the School's pianos. For the 15 lessons in the second semester, I agree to pay $900 or $975 for violin or piano lessons, and, if applicable, an additional $45.00 for the use of the School's pianos. I understand that payment must be made in advance of the section's lessons and that no refund for unused lessons will be made after the second lesson. Finally, I know that there is the possibility that the School may be unable to provide lessons if a student is the only one enrolled in the class or if a suitable teacher cannot be found**.**

Parent or guardian signature: _____ Date: _____