

BRAVO Homeschool Strings

2020-21 Policies

(Revised with COVID changes 6/2020)

Bravo Homeschool Strings welcomes homeschooled students of any race, nationality, or religious persuasion.

Bravo is not a group lesson program. It is an orchestra program with orchestra rehearsals and concerts. Private lessons are highly recommended for all students, but are not required.

Please note that various changes and flexibility in these Policies may be necessary during the year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. BRAVO will announce changes as needed in order to comply with any state requirements or CDC guidance that is continued, issued, or changed.

Age

Generally, *Bravo's* ensembles are for children age 9 and up. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis at the director's discretion. If your child is younger but has had some private lessons, please ask!

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. Please be on time for rehearsals – tardiness is disruptive and is less than respectful to the instructor and the other students. Students missing multiple rehearsals within a concert period, or missing a rehearsal prior to a performance, may have their seating changed or be denied permission to perform.

We try to make our calendar of activities available as early as possible. Please write all *Bravo* activities into your family's calendar as soon as possible, so that no one will say later, “But we didn't know the concert was then!”

If you will have to miss a rehearsal due to illness or family emergency, please send an e-mail to BravoHomeschoolStrings(at Gmail-dot-com) to let us know. **All current state requirements and CDC guidelines will be followed regarding admission of students and family members to the building. If you are sick, please plan to stay home.**

Parental Supervision

A parent or guardian must remain on the church premises with each student (or sibling), with the following exception: **With the director's approval, students age 13 and up may be dropped off for their class period only.**

Students 16 & older may drive themselves to *Bravo*, and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. They may not stay on the church premises outside of their class time without the director's approval.

Normal Pre-COVID rules: Four classrooms adjacent to the Fellowship Hall are available for parents and siblings to read or work quietly. One of those rooms will be designated as a play room for younger children.

Parents of children age 12 or younger must remain on the church premises (sitting in the car is fine) unless they make arrangements with another adult to be responsible for their children. A student who is being left with another adult must be signed in at the attendance register, designating which adult on the church premises (on that day) is responsible for that child. You must leave your cell phone number as a contact, and also either indicate the time you will be returning for pick-up, or instructions that the student is to leave with the designated adult. Both the student and the designated adult must also be aware of who is responsible for whom.

New rules related to COVID-19: Entrance and exit from the building may be restricted to protect the health & safety of students, families and staff. We cannot guarantee that non-participating family members will be allowed into the building. We will do our best to ensure that at least restroom access remains available, but study and play areas, for example, may only be available if CDC guidelines permit. Nevertheless, each student under the age of 16 must have a parent, guardian, or other designated adult responsible for them present on the church premises at all times.

Tuition & Fees

An Application Fee of \$40 per student or parent enrolling is due with the Application Form. All Application Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable outside of the immediate family (i.e., they may be transferred to a sibling). *However, for the 2020-21 season only, Application Fees will be refunded for any student whom we can not successfully place in a group.*

Tuition for 2020-21 is \$125 per student per semester for the first 2 students in a family. No tuition is charged for the third child and beyond. For each child enrolled, each semester's tuition (\$125) is due in full on the day of that semester's first rehearsals. If there are extenuating circumstances, please discuss potential payment plans with the Director.

The fee for a participating parent is \$75 per year, due by the first day of rehearsals (August 24).

A Non-Volunteer Fee of \$70 is charged for each family not providing a parent volunteer. If your family is not volunteering, this fee is due by the day of the first rehearsals. If a parent is unable to volunteer for medical reasons, an exemption will be granted. The Non-Volunteer Fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.

A Late Fee of \$20 will be charged for tuition or fees not paid by the date due. Unpaid tuition or fees may cause your child to be dropped from a class, or prevent participation in a concert. A fee of \$35 will be charged for any returned check.

If there are special circumstances that may cause your payment to be late, please let us know so that an arrangement can be worked out.

Once classes begin, parents are liable for tuition and fees for their children for the entire school year. This specifically includes situations in which a child tires of the program, has too many other activities, or withdraws from *Bravo* during the year to re-enroll in school. The only exceptions to this policy are the death or catastrophic illness of a parent or child, moving more than 30 miles from *Bravo's* location, or a parent becoming unemployed. If an external circumstance such as a government mandate results in *Bravo* not being able to meet for an extended time, appropriate refunds may be made.

Parent Participation

Parents who can play violin, viola, cello, or bass are welcome to participate (space permitting) in *Bravo* ensembles along with their children. If enrollment must be limited due to government action, students will be given priority over parents who wish to participate. Parents must audition for placement in an ensemble just as students do. There is no tuition for parents; a participating parent pays only the \$75 Participating Parent Fee. It builds family unity when both parent and child are learning together -- students are encouraged to be diligent when they see their parents practicing diligently.

Facility Care

Please remember that we are guests at Redeemer Presbyterian, and at any other concert venues. Please leave everything in better condition than you found it in. Smoking is forbidden in the church building. Parents wishing to smoke should do so at their car only, never inside or near the church building.

Normal Pre-COVID rules: For rehearsals at Redeemer, please enter and leave only by the basement door to the right of the front door of the church. The only parts of the church building *Bravo* is allowed to use are the basement Fellowship Hall, four adjacent classrooms, kitchen, and restrooms. The nursery, preschool room and utility rooms downstairs, and the entire upstairs, are off-limits. The kitchen is not to be used for food preparation, but hand-washing and minor clean-up (rinsing coffee cups, wiping tables...) are allowed. No one may play the piano.

Outside the church, young children may play only in the grassy area, under the direct supervision of a parent. There is *not* a playground available. There should be no playing immediately around the church building or in the parking lot or woods, and no child should ever be left unattended outside the church. Parent monitors will be checking on this.

New rules related to COVID-19: Entrance and exit from the building may be restricted to protect the health & safety of students, families and staff. We cannot guarantee that non-participating family members will be allowed into the building. We will do our best to ensure that at least restroom access remains available, but study and play areas, for example, may only be available if state requirements and CDC guidelines permit.

Code of Conduct

Students and family members are expected to behave in a respectful, cooperative, considerate, careful and modest fashion at all times. *Bravo* seeks to cultivate an environment of learning and mutual respect; any behavior which detracts from this environment will not be tolerated.

At no time should students exhibit behavior such as:

- Disrespect for any parent, monitor, or director
- Disrupting rehearsal
- Foul language or gestures
- Other unwholesome talk
- Roughhousing
- Bullying
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Damaging the property of others
- Immodest or inappropriate personal relations with others
- Any other behavior deemed inappropriate by the director

Any student whose conduct violates these principles may be subject to dismissal from the program at the discretion of the director, without refund.

Possession or use of weapons, illegal drugs, or alcohol on the church property are strictly forbidden, as is any tobacco use by minors. Parents wishing to smoke must do so at their car.

We are privileged to meet at Redeemer Presbyterian and other concert facilities. Any abuse of these facilities could cause us to lose this privilege; therefore, abuse of the facilities may be grounds for immediate dismissal without refund, depending on the seriousness of the infraction. Damage done to facilities or equipment will be the financial responsibility of those who cause the damage.

This code of conduct will be enforced before, during, and after all *Bravo* activities, at any location.

New rules related to COVID-19: In addition to the above, all students (and family members) are expected to adhere to any and all health & safety guidelines that are announced by Bravo.

Cell Phones & Computers

Cell phones may be carried by students, but should be turned off in the rehearsal room. All use of cell phones or electronic devices by family members should be limited to areas where it will not disturb the rehearsal or others who may be working. Please be considerate!

Any content on computers or mobile devices while at *Bravo* is subject to monitoring by the responsible adults present. The church's wireless network is not available for public use.

Dress Code

Everyone (including family members of students) must come properly dressed to *Bravo*. We ask students and their family members wear modest clothing. For girls, please no low-cut necklines, spaghetti straps, skin-tight clothes or midriff skin showing. No short shorts, short skirts, or low-cut shorts. No undergarments should be visible. Please wear belts if necessary to accomplish this.

If not dressed properly, students may be asked to put on something more modest, or may be dismissed from a rehearsal or performance. Other family members who are not dressed properly may be asked to sit in the car.

Concert Dress

Appropriate dress is an important part of concert presentation. We don't wish to burden families with the extra expense of concert uniforms, but *Bravo* does require students to wear "Sunday best" for concerts. Please observe the following guidelines for concert dress:

BOYS: Black dress pants (no jeans); white long-sleeved dress shirt; dark solid-color or conservative pattern tie (no bright orange, flags, cartoon characters, etc.); black socks and black dress shoes.

GIRLS: Long black skirt (below the knees) or black dress pants (no jeans); nice long-sleeved white top (no t-shirts); tights or pantyhose if wearing a skirt; black dress shoes.

Volunteers

Bravo Homeschool Strings requires families to be involved in the operation of the program. One parent from each family must sign up for one of the necessary volunteer jobs during the year. Typically, volunteer jobs are such things as concert ushering or clean-up, reception planning, rehearsal monitoring, etc.

A list of volunteer jobs and times needed will be made available sometime before the start of rehearsals in August. Please sign up as soon as possible. We need all families to respond early to have the whole year scheduled. The more people are available, the less any individual volunteer will need to do.

If a parent has health problems that preclude volunteer work, an exemption will be granted. Otherwise, families too busy or unwilling to volunteer will be charged \$70 per year to be of help in a different way. Please sure to indicate this by checking the appropriate box on the Application Form.

Instruments

It is each student's responsibility to come to rehearsals with an instrument, bow and equipment that is in good playing condition. Unfortunately, *Bravo* cannot provide instruments for students. Before the beginning of the year, please take your instrument to a reputable strings-only shop (such as [Ronald Sachs Violins](#)) to have it "tuned-up." Various minor repairs and adjustments may be necessary, you may need new strings, or you may need to have your bow repaired or get a new (inexpensive) student bow with good hair.

Instrument Care at Rehearsals and Concerts

Students should never play or handle another student's instrument, case, or accessories. Instruments and bows should never be left sitting out – please put them in the case for safety if you have to leave temporarily. Cases, backpacks and bags should be kept either on available tables, or in out-of-the-way spots around the edge of the Fellowship Hall. Please show courtesy to others by not leaving your things in the walking areas!

New rules related to COVID-19: Each student may have his/her own designated area in which to unpack instruments and leave coats, backpacks, etc. Please respect these areas if we need to use them!

Other Required Materials

Please make sure that all your things are clearly labeled!

Music Stand in good condition (important – tippy stands cause disruption and may cause damage)

Shoulder Rest or sponge (for violin & viola)

Appropriate Concert Dress is also required (see above).

Parents may need to provide one or two inexpensive music books for their children in certain ensembles. The total cost will not be more than about \$15. Notification will be made ahead of time if this is required.

In addition, students must always bring the following to rehearsals:

Music Folder (issued by *Bravo*) with all *Bravo* music

Pencils !!

New rules related to COVID-19: Each student or family member may also be required to bring his/her own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks, hand sanitizer, etc.

Folders & Music

All folders & music issued by *Bravo* remain the property of *Bravo* and must be returned. A fee of \$5 will be charged per item of music not returned, and a fee of \$5 per folder not returned, since those items will have to be re-purchased.

Students may write in *pencil only* on their *Bravo* music, taking care to be neat so that the music is usable for the next student who uses it.

Private Lessons and Practicing

Private lessons are NOT a requirement but are *strongly* encouraged. Students who receive individual instruction will almost always make better progress than who do not. Each student musician is expected to practice his/her *Bravo* music carefully during the week. Students who take private lessons need to organize their practice time during the week so that they work adequately on both their lesson music and their orchestra music.

Stringsational

Stringsational is a one day educational music event for homeschool string students and private school students. Stringsational is usually held on a Saturday in February or March each year, and has been held at Sandy Plains Baptist Church in East Cobb the last several years. Student musicians from all over the state attend Stringsational, where they are treated to a day of both sectional and orchestral music instruction with guest conductors. Stringsational ends with the student musicians performing a concert for family and friends. The low fee includes a t-shirt, lunch, snacks, instruction, and concert. Stringsational is held concurrently with Bandtastic, for band students. You can find more information each year about Stringsational at www.JoyfulNoiseBand.com, or e-mail: Susan_Davis (at) joyfulnoiseband.com.

Lost and Found

Any items found left behind will be available in a lost-and-found for one month; after such time items will be sold or donated. PLEASE put your name on everything! Coats, backpacks, music stands, music books, and even violin cases can look the same! Please assume the responsibility of keeping up with your own things.

E-mail

Most correspondence from *Bravo* will be via e-mail. Please check your e-mail regularly, and be sure to notify *Bravo* immediately if you have a change of e-mail address! Bravo can always be reached at BravoHomeschoolStrings(at Gmail-dot-com).

Bad Weather Policy

Due to the distances some of our families travel, we have a conservative bad weather policy. If Gwinnett Public Schools are closed due to the weather, *Bravo* will also be closed. These days are normally not made up.