Colorado Academy Instrumental Music & Private Lesson Program
At Colorado Academy, we believe musical training is essential to the overall education of a child. Music education is an integral component of the curriculum from the earliest grades.

Beyond the regular curriculum, Middle and Upper School music students may participate in both audition and non-audition singing groups. Opportunities to expand one’s music interests include everything from a digital recording studio and music composition lab to private voice and music lessons on many instruments.

The private music program at Colorado Academy has been a powerful experience for generations of students of CA students. CA has been offering this program since 1973. The heart of the program has always been the desire of students and families to have music lessons and recital performances as a part of their formal education training at CA. Private music lessons are available as early as the second half of Kindergarten. Lessons are scheduled as part of a student’s regular school day, and music students participate in a variety of our many recital performances throughout the year. More than 14,000 private music lessons are given each year for 47% of the students at CA in grades K-12. Lessons are billed each trimester through the students’ account.

“Don’t leave the instrument sitting in its case, my child. Play! Leave no part of your instrument unexplored. Why settle for ‘Three Blind Mice’ when you can play the ‘Gloria’?” Abraham Verghese, Cutting for Stone

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Honors & Accolades

Our students have been chosen to participate in or have won honors in the following:

- Breckenridge Music Festival
- Clementi Music Festival
- Colorado All-State Orchestra
- Colorado Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composer Contest
- Colorado Flute Association Student Solo Honors Competition
- Columbine Music Teachers Association Classical Music Festival
- Denver Inside the Orchestra
- Denver Young Artists Orchestra
- Interlochen Music Academy
- Mercury Chamber Orchestra
- National Repertory Orchestra
- Schmitt Music Piano Competition
- Southwest American Choral Directors Honors
- United States International Duo Piano Competition
- Western States Honors Orchestra Festival

The Power of Music Education

Studies over the past two decades have shown that:

- Children who study music tend to have larger vocabularies and more advanced reading skills than their peers who do not participate in music lessons.
- Research shows that music is to the brain as physical exercise is to the human body. Music tones the brain for auditory fitness and allows it to decipher between tone and pitch.
- When a child plays a musical instrument he or she is developing key brain function that not only enhances musical learning but also academic and social skills.
- Secondary students who participated in a music group at school reported the lowest lifetime and current use of all substances (tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs).
- Regardless of socioeconomic status or school district, students who participate in high-quality music programs score at least 20% higher on standardized exams.
- Much like expert technical skills, mastery in arts and humanities is closely correlated to high earnings.
- A study from Columbia University revealed that students who study arts are more cooperative with their teachers and peers, have higher levels self-confidence, and are more equipped to express themselves and their ideas.
- Elementary age children who are involved in music lessons show greater brain development and memory improvement within a year than children who receive no musical training.
- Learning and mastering a musical instrument improves the way the brain breaks down and understands human language, making music students more apt to pick up a second language.
Private Instrumental Music Lessons

**Kindergarten**
Children may begin in January of their Kindergarten year, with approval from both Kindergarten teachers and the Lower School Principal. If a student has been enrolled in lessons at Colorado Academy from the prior summer or in another program outside of CA, then he or she may begin lessons in the fall. *Private instruction for Kindergarten students is available only in these instruments: piano, violin, cello, and penny whistle.* Please note that parents are REQUIRED to attend lessons at this grade level.

**First and Second Grades**
Children may begin private instruction in the fall of the school year, with classroom teacher approval. Private instruction for first and second grade students is available in these instruments: piano, violin, cello, and flute.  
- **Piano**: Traditional Method only – parents are NOT required to attend lessons.  
- **Violin, cello, flute**: Suzuki Method – parents are required to attend all lessons.

**Third Grade**
Children may begin private instruction in the fall of the school year. Private instruction for third grade students is available in these instruments: piano, violin, viola, cello, and flute. Parents are not required to attend piano lessons. Parents of students learning the Suzuki method are urged to attend lessons as often as possible, or all lessons, if student is a beginner.  
- **Piano**: Traditional Method  
- **Violin, viola, cello, flute**: Suzuki/Traditional method combination

**Fourth Grade**
Children may begin private instruction in the fall of the school year. Private instruction for fourth grade students is available in these instruments: piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, and saxophone. Parents of students learning the Suzuki method are urged to attend lessons as often as possible. Parents are not required to attend lessons of students learning the Traditional method.
- **Piano, clarinet, and saxophone**: Traditional Method.  
- **Violin, viola, cello, flute**: Suzuki/Traditional Method combination

**Fifth Grade**
Children may begin private instruction in the fall of the school year. Private instruction for fifth grade students is available in these instruments: piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, and trombone. Parents are not required to attend piano lessons. Parents of those students learning the Suzuki Method are encouraged to attend when their schedule permits.  
- **Piano, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, and trombone**: Traditional Method.  
- **Violin, viola, cello, flute**: Suzuki/Traditional Method combination.

**Sixth – Eighth Grades**
Private instruction is available in these instruments: piano, violin, flute, cello, viola, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, saxophone, and guitar.

**Ninth – Twelfth Grades**
Private instruction is available in these instruments: piano, violin, flute, cello, viola, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, saxophone, guitar, and voice.

**Composition Lessons**
K-12: A composition student MUST be taking private lessons from a CA music teacher or music teacher outside of CA to be eligible for composition lessons. Students MUST be recommended by their private teacher to participate. Lessons take place in the Digital Music Lab in the Schotters Music Center.
**Testimonials**

“The private music lesson program at CA is a gem. The convenience of having the instructor on campus and lessons organized during the school day were integral to our son’s ability to begin cello lessons in the sixth grade. As his schedule was already full with after school activities at the time, he would not have been able to try the cello without CA’s program. With the skilled and positive instruction he received, he was hooked and is still taking cello lessons as a senior.”

*Upper School parent*

“CA’s music program has come to mean a great deal in our family’s life. The level of professionalism, the depth of the teachers’ knowledge, the progress students make, the performance opportunities, are nothing short of extraordinary. The program has sparked and fostered an interest in our children that we might not have known existed. For one of our children in particular, this musical interest has become a passion that will likely accompany him through life.”

*Middle School parent*

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**Instrumental Music Ensembles and Group Lessons**

**LS/MS/US String Orchestra**
For all string players who take lessons at CA starting in Fourth Grade.

**Violin Suzuki group lessons**
Grades K-3 for students who take private lessons at CA.

**Flute Suzuki group lessons**
Grades K-5 for students who take private lessons at CA.

**Cello Suzuki group lessons**
Grades K-5 for students who take private lessons at CA.

**Cello ensemble**
Middle and Upper School students who take private lessons at CA.

**Chamber Music Program**
Grades 3-12: May include all instruments taught at CA in private music lesson program; advanced students only; MUST be recommended by their CA private lesson teacher.

**Piano Ensemble Program**
Grades 3-12 advanced pianists - MUST be recommended by their CA private lesson teacher.

**Jazz/Rock Combo**
Grades 4–12 instrumentalists — MUST be recommended by their CA private lesson teacher or teacher outside of CA. If enrollment is high, students will audition for placement.

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**Recital Program**

CA is celebrating more than 40 years of successful lessons and recitals. Among the most influential experiences is that students perform in recitals for both peers and parents, and that younger musicians are able to see the musical achievements that come with practice and dedication. Students also learn the benefits of being and having an engaged, appropriate, and respectful audience.

- **Piano Recitals:** 6-7 per year
- **Strings Concerts:** 4 per year
- **Flute Recitals:** 3 per year
- **Jazz/Rock Combo Concerts:** 2-3 per year
- **Chamber Music Concert:** 1 per year
- **Piano Ensemble Concert:** 1 per year
- **Woodwinds, Brass, Guitar:** 2 recitals per year
- **Jazz/Rock Combos:** 2 recitals per year
Lesson Scheduling

Students are scheduled during non-academic times: homeroom, advisory, free block, other music, or art classes, recess, or other free times. **Returning** students are scheduled first, starting with seniors, and then in reverse chronological order through Kindergarten. **New** students are scheduled after returning students. New students who do not receive a time slot are put on a waiting list until an appropriate time slot opens up.

Lesson Sign-Up

Forms are on the CA web site starting in April. Notifications on the CA website in April for due dates.

**Returning student forms due:** Mid-July.

**Early September:** New instrumental music students’ forms due. Lessons begin in early September.

**Required Forms:** Private Music Lesson Request Form and Contract Form. Forms are available on the CA website.

**Send to:** Becky Burchfield, Private Lesson Coordinator

**Email:** becky.burchfield@coloradoacademy.org

**Fax:** Smith Center: 303-914-2583 attn: Becky Burchfield

**Hand-Deliver:** Division Secretary

**Mail:** Becky Burchfield, Colorado Academy

3800 South Pierce Street

Denver, CO 80235

**More info and questions:**

Becky Burchfield 303-986-1501 x2644

**Email:** becky.burchfield@coloradoacademy.org

Testimonials

“What started as an hour a day for a one-week penny whistle summer camp when my daughter was 5 years old has blossomed into a deep love and talent for playing the flute. This is because of the amazing support and instruction she has received from her flute teacher and master flautist. To be able to take lessons on campus during the school day in the Schotters Music Building has been instrumental in allowing my child to easily walk from her classroom to her lesson. Needless to say, the musical talent that has been nurtured in her is one of the many reasons she attends CA.”

- Lower School Parent

The private lesson program at CA is a great value! Our child has been able to take private lessons while having the opportunity to play in chamber groups and orchestra. The program also offers students the experience of playing in recitals at the school and competitions outside CA. Replicating these opportunities outside of the school would be so much more complicated! We highly recommend it!

- Middle School Parent
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