

## WHERE DOES YOUR MUSIC LESSON MONEY GO?

Many people think the private music teacher's fee pays only for the half-hour he or she spends with the student. This is incorrect. The tuition fee reimburses the teacher for much more.

### EDUCATION INVESTMENT

The teacher has already paid for an education in music—years of private study, college or conservatory training, graduate study, and independent research.

### PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONALISM

Each weekly lesson requires the teacher to spend time in study and preparation. Expenses accumulate as the teacher seeks to improve his or her abilities by attending workshops, lectures, recitals, concerts, and conventions; taking lessons him or herself; joining professional organizations and paying dues; subscribing to professional journals; and buying books, music, and recordings.

### OPERATING EXPENSES

Even if a separate studio is not owned and operated, rental costs and costs of keeping pianos tuned and in good repair add up. Other expenses include maintaining computer equipment, printing of statements, programs, letters, invitations, publicity, postage, and other miscellaneous supplies.

### SALARY AND BENEFITS

Benefits that other professional people may take for granted, the piano teacher must provide for him or herself. These include a guaranteed salary, paid holidays and vacations, sick leave and personal days, health insurance for self-employed persons, pension plans for retirement, and unemployment. While most salaried people receive a cost-of-living pay automatically, teachers have to adjust for these increases by raising their fees.

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Universities and music schools consider 20 hours of actual teaching time a week of full-time job for full-time pay because the hours of preparation and study required to prepare for class time usually brings that total to more than 40 hours a week.

In addition, private teachers accept that their job often requires irregular hours, which can affect mealtime planning and cut into family life.

Music teachers accept the disadvantages found in their job because they love the field of music. Indeed, love of music, love of teaching, and love of children are the only valid reasons for becoming a piano teacher.

When choosing a music teacher, consider all of these factors, and keep them in mind during the long-term relationship between the student and teacher. *Music lessons are not a product that you pay for each week. They are an investment in a lifetime of enrichment for your child.*

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