

# McLelland Piano Studio

## Studio Policies 2024-2025

Teacher: Amy McLelland, NCTM

Website: [www.McLellandPiano.com](http://www.McLellandPiano.com)

Website Password = Baldwin

[McLellandPiano@gmail.com](mailto:McLellandPiano@gmail.com) (\*email is the most reliable)

Cell: (205) 908-5830

3148 Paradise Acres, Hoover, AL 35244

Monday: Studio Address: 3100 Highland Avenue; Birmingham, Alabama 35205  
(Independent Presbyterian Church, choir room)

Tuesday: Studio Address = Student's Home in Hoover, AL

Thursday: Virtual Lessons

Friday-Saturday: Out-of-town lessons select weekends (Atlanta, New Orleans, Nashville, and other locations tba)

**Admission:** Students are accepted into the program following the successful completion of a personal interview and audition. If the enrollment is full, students may be placed on a waiting list and contacted as soon as an opening is available. An additional audition is not required for subsequent years as long as the student has

- remained enrolled and attended private lessons regularly
- completed and paid for a minimum of 30 private lessons during the course of the academic year
- participated in studio spring recital
- attended any group classes, special events sponsored by the studio
- abided by the rules and policies listed within the studio policies
- paid tuition regularly and in a timely manner
- demonstrated sufficient practice and discipline required for continued progress

In the event of irregular attendance, repeated late tuition payments, repeated failure to prepare assigned material, student's lack of interest over extended time period, or regular inappropriate behavior during lessons or group events, the instructor reserves the right to terminate lessons. Students who discontinue study at any time during the year may, at the teacher's discretion, be added to the end of the studio's waiting list. A student from the waiting list will fill the empty slot and placement in future scheduling may not be guaranteed.

**Scheduling:** Students enrolled in regular lessons will complete 30 instructional sessions during the year academic year.

**Registration:** Fall registration is conducted in late July. Each year, new and returning students are asked to visit the “Fall Registration” page on the studio website and complete the online forms (student profile update, studio policy contract agreement, and other forms) so that we can keep records up-to-date.

**Tuition and Fees:** There are 2 payment options for students enrolled in regular lessons:

- 1) Tuition for the entire year (all 30 lessons) in one payment by August 1.
  - 2) Tuition for the entire year (all 30 lesson) paid in 12 monthly installments due NO LATER THAN the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, August-July. Note that paying in installments involves making tuition payments during the summer months when lessons are not scheduled. We are trusting students who choose the installment plan to honor payment of lessons previous received. We do not add interest but rely upon the student’s honoring of debt.
- Tuition is due NO LATER THAN the 1st of each month.
  - Tuition may be paid online with a credit card (including extra surcharges) at [www.McLellandPiano.com](http://www.McLellandPiano.com) (“pay tuition”), or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month or delivered in person via check or cash the lesson prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, or mailed to: 3148 Paradise Acres, Hoover, AL 35244. Checks are payable to: Amy McLelland, not McLelland Piano.
  - A \$10 late fee will be applied to all payments **RECEIVED after the 1st** of the month due date.
  - If tuition payments are consistently late, lessons may be terminated until payment is received.
  - A \$30 returned-check fee will be applied to any returned checks. A subsequent \$10.00 late fee may also be added if the delay extends beyond the payment deadline.
  - Tuition will be pro-rated for students who join the studio once a term is in progress.

## Tuition Payment Schedule

PLAN A: 12 monthly payments of \$205. Includes 30 instructional sessions (45-minute lessons), all music, supplies, Apps subscriptions, and all studio special events and recitals.)

PLAN B: \$12 monthly payments of \$270/month. Includes 30 instructional sessions (60-minute lessons), all music, supplies, Apps subscriptions, and all studio special events and recitals.

PLAN C: \$90 per 60-minute lesson (*For out-of-town students or those studying on an irregular basis*)

FAMILY MEMBER DISCOUNT: For 2 students within the same family enrolled in lessons at McLelland Piano.

## What do Tuition Fees Include?

- Instruction in piano and theory/musicianship private and special group workshops
- All special studio events, masterclasses, recitals

- All instructional material, music including student's personal music and lending library
- Piano Maestro, Playground Sessions, and other Apps requiring teacher subscription

Projected Fees for Special Events: (not included in tuition) – Not required, for interested and qualifying students only:

- AMTA District Solo Auditions (\$25 entry fee)
- AMTA State Solo Auditions (\$25 entry fee)
- AMTA Concerto Auditions (\$25 entry fee)
- BMTA Sonata-Sonatina Competition (\$20 entry fee)
- BMMF Certificate of Merit Theory Exams and Masterclass (\$20)
- ASO Concerto Auditions (TBA)
- Optional private lessons with John Bloomfield on Zoom or Skype (\$80 per half hour)

Note: Teacher consent is required for student participation in all non-studio competitions, workshops, master classes and camps.

## Special Events and Student Opportunities

- Students of all ages and levels are afforded numerous opportunities to participate in festivals and competitions sponsored by the studio. Additionally, there are special events sponsored by groups such as the Birmingham Music Teachers Association, Metro Music Forum, Alabama Music Teachers Association and Music Teachers National Association.
- Required of all pre-college students: 1) Participation in regular private lessons; 2) Participation in spring recital and other studio performances appropriate for specified age and level of advancement.
- Teacher consent is required for student participation in all non-studio competitions, workshops, master classes and camps.

**Attendance Policy:** There are no refunds for missed lessons. Up to 3 “make-up” lessons will be offered (virtually or in-person tba) during the summer months for lessons missed due to student illness, emergencies, or teacher cancellations. There are no “make-ups” offered if a student misses a lesson for any reason other than illness, death in the family, or lessons canceled by teacher due to teacher illness or emergency weather conditions. Non-emergency cancellations for events such as birthday parties, school trips, family vacations, baseball games, other extra-curricular activities, and “no shows” will necessitate charging the full lesson fee for the unused time reserved for the student. Please do NOT attend lessons when you are ill and highly contagious. Please do NOT attend lessons if a family member or someone you have been in contact with has contracted Covid, Flu, or other contagious illnesses.

**Termination of Lessons:** In the event of irregular attendance, repeated late tuition payments, repeated failure to prepare assigned material, student's lack of interest over extended time period, or regular inappropriate behavior during lessons or group events, the instructor reserves the right to terminate lessons. When possible, a one-month trial period with parent notification will precede lesson termination. ***A minimum of 2 lessons notification is requested of those who must discontinue***

***study at any time throughout the year.*** Students who discontinue study at any time during the year may be added to the end of the studio's waiting list. A student from the waiting list will fill the empty slot and placement in future scheduling will not be guaranteed.

PLEASE POST the studio calendar and record all dates in your PERSONAL CALENDARS. **Be sure to visit the website calendar regularly as dates are sometimes changed due to teacher performance, lectures, and workshop commitments.**

**Media Release Consent Form:** Students (or parents/guardians of students under 18) are asked to sign a consent form requesting permission for a student's photo, video, or audio recording to be published on the studio web sites or in printed publications such as a studio newsletter, brochure, or educational materials.

**Practice Requirements:** Learning how to practice correctly is a process and requires dedication, diligence and consistency from both student and parent. Students and parents of pre-college students are asked to refer to guidelines provided in the studio handout Practice Expectations and Recommendations. Careful application of these guidelines and other teacher suggestions will enable advancement and ultimate enjoyment of music.

- Regular, concentrated, daily practice plus regular lessons and special events will lead to a student's progress. The amount of attentive practice is directly proportional to the amount of progress a student makes. Each student will progress as quickly as the assigned material is sufficiently mastered.
- All students are enrolled with the understanding that they are required to schedule at least 6 different practice sessions on six days a week unless sick or out of town. Additionally, students are encouraged to schedule several sets of 21 consecutive days (21 CD's Program) of practice throughout the year (thus establishing a habit).
- It is important to reserve a "set time" for your practice. Write-out your practice schedule and POST. Try to keep this appointment with yourself, just as you would keep a dentist appointment.
- Quality and consistency of practice is more important than quantity.

**Assignment Notebooks & Practice Chart:** Each pre-college student will have a custom-built webpage which will house all current assignments, videos, and other listening examples, worksheets, and more. Please refer to this page regularly. Visit [www.McLellandPiano.com](http://www.McLellandPiano.com). Additionally, students will find video examples of required Keyboard Theory and Technic for their age division (scales, chords etc.), sight-reading, helpful articles, and more valuable resource on the studio website.

- All pre-college students should keep a practice log of the days practiced. When a student achieves 21 Consecutive Days (without missing a single day) of practice they progress up a level in the 21 CD Challenge. Students who reach level 7 (completing 7 sets of 21-consecutive-days of

practice) during the academic year will receive a trophy award presented at the spring recital. Parents are asked to help younger students record their practice chart.

- Parents of pre-college students are also asked to consult the student assignments and offer gentle guidance with organizing daily practice schedule as well as suggestions for organizing home practice sessions, just as they would do when assisting with daily school homework assignments.
- Once an assignment is sufficiently mastered, the teacher will mark "Off" over the date on the music page (and possibly add sticker for younger students). The student is no longer responsible for practicing pieces marked "off". Continual re-assignment of a piece would suggest the need for more effective practice, (with long-term recital pieces being an exception).

## **Important Considerations Involving the Development of a Healthy Piano Technic:**

- It is important that the student's fingernails be kept short not only for the lessons but for daily practice as well.
- It is imperative that students adjust benches during lessons AND HOME PRACTICE. Correct bench height = bottom of elbows level with tops of white keys. Correct bench distance = elbows at sides and SLIGHTLY to front of torso/waist.
- Feet should not "dangle". PLEASE PROVIDE A FOOT STOOL, or use rubber mats or books, if feet cannot balance comfortably on floor (with heels FLAT on the floor).
- Bench should not be too close to piano. Weight should be distributed evenly between "sit bones" and feet. Therefore, it is important to sit on FRONT part of bench, to throw balance slightly forward toward keys. Please visit [McLellandPiano.com](http://McLellandPiano.com) for articles on developing a healthy technic. DVD's and reference articles are also available at the studio.

## **General Rules:**

- All students are asked to arrive on time for the lessons and special group events AND TO BRING ALL books and materials to each lesson even if there was not an assignment made in a particular book at the previous lesson. (Books with "Leave at Home" should NOT be brought to lessons. Please update and cleanout music bags to save valuable lesson time.)
- Please arrive at lessons prepared to play having finished snacks and drinks before entering studio.
- NO FOOD OR DRINKS ALLOWED NEAR PIANOS OR KEYBOARDS. One drop of liquid spilled in a grand piano could be a \$60,000+ mishap.
- Please wash hands before lessons.
- If you are the 1st student of the day and arrive early, please wait in your car until your lesson time.
- The teacher cannot be responsible for student supervision before or after teaching hours. Please inform the teacher in advance if it is necessary for a carpool to arrive early or late. Teacher supervision may not be available before and after teaching hours.

- Parents are invited to wait in the waiting area (at IPC) during lessons. Siblings are also invited to wait in the waiting area during lessons however running, screaming and other inappropriate behavior throughout the church facilities, or at any festival or performance venue is to be avoided at all times.
- Please instruct younger children who will be waiting alone to treat the furnishings and materials with care.

**A Final Note:** The study of music is rewarding and enjoyable, but it is also challenging and demands discipline and hard work. Each student will move along as quickly as the assigned material is sufficiently mastered. We all have bad days, or even bad weeks. These should be expected to occur with all students. A student/parent should only become concerned if these “off lessons” continue for several weeks at a time, or if several quarter evaluations indicate poor progress. If this occurs, the teacher will contact you to see if a solution can be worked out together. Otherwise, don’t worry – just enjoy!

**A note to parents:** It is my sincere desire that my teaching and your support at home --- with encouragement, praise, and discipline when needed --- will form an effective team. Piano lessons may be the first serious commitment a young child has ever made. As you know, a child will be only as committed as his/her parents are. By working together, we can make music one of the most enjoyable experiences your child will ever encounter. Music study is one of the few avenues of training they will carry with them an entire lifetime.

Communication Concerns If you have any questions or concerns, I will be happy to discuss them with you. Please feel free to phone or e-mail to discuss your or your child’s progress. During teaching hours calls will be answered by the machine and returned as soon as possible. PHONE: (205) 908-5830 E-mail: McLellandPiano@gmail.com.

Respectfully,

Amy L. Aberg McLelland, Nationally Certified Teacher of Music with Music Teachers National Association; Certified Instructor Golandsky Piano Institute, New York City