



# STUDENT HANDBOOK

DANCE  
DIGITAL ARTS  
DRAMA  
CREATIVE WRITING  
MUSIC  
VISUAL ARTS



## **Student handbook table of contents:**

- I. Welcome
- II. Contact us

### **A. General Information**

1. Getting Started
2. Change of Address
3. Change of Telephone
4. School Closings
5. Special Events
6. Student Confidential Information
7. Library

### **B. Student Responsibilities**

1. Always have a pencil with you
2. Practice Requirements
3. Attendance
4. When you arrive
5. Late policy
6. Missed Lessons
7. Performance and Exhibit Opportunities
8. Auditions
9. Use of Instruments, Rooms and Materials
10. General rules
11. Safety indoors and out
12. Reporting Harassment
13. Emergency Preparedness

### **C. Parent Responsibilities**

1. Childcare
2. Pick up
3. Field trips
4. Parent Involvement

### **D. Registration**

1. Enrollment
2. Sliding Fee Scale
3. Cancellations, Schedule Changes, Withdrawal, Refunds and Dismissal
4. Tuition Payments, Billing and Fees

## **WELCOME TO SITAR ARTS CENTER**

Sitar Arts Center advances the critical life skills of underserved children and youth and prepares them for achievement in the 21st century through visual, performing, and digital arts education in a nurturing community. Fostering personal and artistic growth through the arts, the Center offers after-school, weekend, and summer classes to more than 800 students a year, 80 percent of whom come from low-income households.

Rhonda Buckley founded the Center in 1998 and named it for Pat Sitar, who was a dedicated community activist and a visual artist. The vision for Sitar Arts Center merged through Rhonda's many years of working with children from low-income homes in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, DC. The families made clear the intense community need for affordable, accessible arts education and safe after-school spaces for their children. A professional saxophonist, Rhonda knew how life-giving, and potentially life-defining, the arts can be for a child.

In 2000, Sitar Arts Center began serving 50 neighborhood children and youth, ages 6 -18, in the small basement of a subsidized apartment building. The first program was instrumental music education and each child had a weekly lesson with a caring volunteer musician as a teacher. Soon after, Sitar Arts Center forged artistic partnerships with the Corcoran Museum-ArtReach program and The Washington Ballet and introduced visual arts and ballet classes.

Sitar Arts Center moved into its new facility in fall 2004, enabling its geographic scope to expand to the neighboring communities of Mt. Pleasant and Columbia Heights. The 10,700 square foot center has ten acoustically sound practice rooms, well-equipped dance and art studios, a gallery, a dark room, multimedia room, library and a professional quality theater.

Once in the door, the students find a wide-range of learning opportunities, peers pursuing positive activities and caring, consistent adults. A growing body of research indicates that arts education improves cognitive ability and academic success and is too-often omitted from every day school curriculum. In addition to a valuable arts education, students at Sitar Arts Center learn accountability, commitment and respect for themselves and others. These values enable the students to develop resilience and persistence, helping them to see beyond the limitations of their circumstances and work towards a future with an abundance of options.

Sitar Arts Center believes that every child is intrinsically gifted but that economically disenfranchised children often lack opportunities. At the Center, no child is turned away because of a family's inability to pay. Instead, children find an abundance of choice and the support of loving adults to help their artistic dreams come true.

## **Contact Information**

If you need to contact our staff for any reason, please call or email.

### **Joel Avila**

Evening Receptionist and Administrative Assistant  
[joel@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:joel@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Zachary Clark**

Early Childhood Arts and Special Projects Director  
[zachary@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:zachary@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Maureen Dwyer**

Executive Director  
[maureen@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:maureen@sitarartscenter.org)

### **David Garfinkel**

Programs Coordinator  
[david@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:david@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Monica Harrington**

Senior Director of Development  
[monica@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:monica@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Beverly Howard**

Morning Receptionist and Administrative Assistant  
[beverly@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:beverly@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Joe Link**

Music Programs Associate  
[joe@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:joe@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Lorena Maysonet**

Operations Coordinator  
[lorenna@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:lorenna@sitarartscenter.org)

### **A. Lorraine Robinson**

Senior Director of Programs  
[lorraine@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:lorraine@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Angela Robinson**

Marketing and Technology Manager  
[angela@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:angela@sitarartscenter.org)

### **Ty Russell**

Student Affairs & Outreach Director  
[ty@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:ty@sitarartscenter.org)

**Loretta Thompson**  
Senior Director of Operations  
[loretta@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:loretta@sitarartscenter.org)

For general inquiries call (202) 797-2145 or email, [communications@sitarartscenter.org](mailto:communications@sitarartscenter.org).

## **A. General Information**

### **1. Getting Started**

As you know, arts instruction is a valuable part of your development. Many studies have shown how study in the arts improves a student's school work and self esteem. Learning an art form also teaches important life skills such as discipline, personal awareness, self-expression, confidence and the benefits of hard work and practice. The arts instruction received at Sitar Arts Center is an important part of your growth and education.

Just as Sitar Arts Center is an asset to everyone in the community, so are its volunteers. Every parent, child, youth, adult and teacher contributes to Sitar Arts Center community by sharing individual gifts.

### **2. Change of Address**

Please inform the Student Affairs & Outreach Director, Ty Russell, at Sitar Arts Center if your address has changed. Students receive notices, calendars, cards, etc. through the mail, so it is very important for parents and adult students to provide this information. Sitar Arts Center does not accept responsibility for lost or undeliverable mail. Students and parents are responsible for meeting all published deadlines and regulations regardless of issues concerning undeliverable mail.

### **3. Change of Telephone**

Please inform the Student Affairs & Outreach Director, Ty Russell, at Sitar Arts Center if you have changed your telephone number. At times we will be required to contact you by telephone, for schedule changes, special events, missed classes, or in case of an emergency. Please make sure we have a current phone number to contact you.

#### **4. School Closings due to inclement weather and holidays**

Sitar Arts Center follows the same schedule as the DC Public School system for closings due to inclement weather conditions and holidays. Please call the Center or visit [www.sitarartscenter.org](http://www.sitarartscenter.org) if you are not sure if we are open. Sitar will also post on Twitter and Facebook if the Center is closed due to inclement weather or other unexpected reasons.

In the event of a delayed DCPS opening, Sitar Arts Center will cancel morning activities and open in the afternoon for afterschool activities. If inclement weather conditions occur later in the afternoon or on a Saturday, Sitar Arts Center reserves the right to make a decision to close at any time and will do its best to contact parents, students, volunteers, and teachers. An early dismissal of DC Public Schools means Sitar Arts Center is closed.

For holiday closings please check Sitar Arts Center's calendar of events, which is available at the front desk and at [www.sitarartscenter.org](http://www.sitarartscenter.org). All policies are subject to change at Sitar Arts Center's discretion.

#### **5. Special Events**

##### Performance Series and Workshops

Each semester, Sitar Arts Center presents a series of professional performances and workshops for our students with the understanding that experiencing the work of professional performing artists is a critical element of arts education. Many of these events are brought to us by our partners including Washington Performing Arts, National Symphony Orchestra, and DC Jazz Festival.

Performances and workshops are free and open to all Sitar Arts Center students, families, and community members. Registered students are required to attend at least one performance each semester. When a performance happens during a class meeting time, all students will attend the performance as their class for that day.

##### Gallery Series

Each semester Sitar Arts Center presents a series of diverse art exhibitions in our gallery space. Art shows range from the work of local professional artists to traveling exhibits that represent different world cultures; the semesters always conclude with the Sitar student art show. Registered students are required to attend a minimum of one art opening a semester.

##### Student Performances and Exhibits

Sitar Arts Center values the sense of pride and recognition that students gain when they share their talents and hard work with the community. The last week of each semester is Student Showcase Week, dedicated to providing our artists with the opportunity to sing, dance, act, play their instruments, and exhibit the visual and digital artwork that they have created during the semester.

#### **6. Student Confidential Information**

Sitar Arts Center keeps all contact information for students confidential. If you wish to obtain contact information for another student, please ask the student directly.

## 7. Library

Sitar Arts Center Library contains a listening lab with CDs, DVDs, sheet music, books and other arts related materials. The Library is open to all registered students and their parents/guardians. The Computers are not intended for general internet use. The computers may be used for Sitar Arts Center related assignments such as music theory and design projects.

### **B. Student Responsibilities**

**1. Always have a pencil and notepad with you!** Sitar Arts Center cannot provide students with pencils and paper. We expect students to take classes seriously and we expect students to take notes.

### **2. Practice Requirements**

All Sitar Arts Center students are encouraged to practice their art form on a regular basis. Teachers are encouraged to give practice assignments in their classes for students to finish at Sitar Arts Center or at home.

Students taking private music lessons are required to practice three times each week. Also, students are required to work on a music theory assignment each week for at least 15 minutes.

Student practice requirements are:

- 15 minutes per day for first year students
- 20 minutes per day for second year students
- 30 minutes per day for third year students

Students may practice anytime the Center is open. At the beginning of each semester, every music student is given a page in the **Practice Log** found in the kids' cafe, to be used for each student to record the date and times when they practice. **Students, when coming to the Center for practice, must record their practice times by initialing their name next to the day, time and minutes of practice. There is also a space for their teachers to initial.** Students who practice at home must also record practice times in the practice log. The practice log will be checked weekly.

**It is mandatory for all music students to record his/her practice times in the Practice Log and show their music instructor before or after every lesson.**

It is a priority at Sitar Arts Center to build awareness in our students and strengthen their skills as artists through discipline and hard work. Practice is an important part of this process. **If a student consistently fails to meet practice and music theory requirements, students will be subject to dismissal from their private instrument lessons as there are other students waiting for a lesson.**

### 3. Attendance

Signing up for a class is a lot of fun and also a big commitment. **You are agreeing to show up on time for your class or music lesson every week for a whole semester!** If some days you cannot make it to class, it is **your responsibility** to call us at Sitar Arts Center **before noon that same day** to let us know that you will be absent. This absence becomes an **excused** absence. We ask that you call by noon so we have ample time to notify your teacher so that they are aware of your absence. If you do not call before noon, you will be issued an **unexcused** absence. Repeated absences may result in removal from the class or program. If dismissed from a private lesson, a student will be suspended for one semester from re-enrolling in private lessons.

Sitar Arts Center is not obligated to reschedule make-up lessons, classes, or workshops for those missed due to student non-attendance, illness, vacation, etc. In the event of a Sitar Arts Center closure or cancellation by an instructor, a make-up date may be scheduled at the instructor's discretion.

**If you will be absent, you must call Sitar Arts Center before noon on the day of your class or lesson. If the absence is not called in, it is an unexcused absence. After five unexcused absences, students are subject to removal from your lesson or class.**

**Sitar Arts Center phone number: (202) 797-2145**

### 4. When you arrive

During the school year, Sitar Arts Center opens its doors for students Monday through Friday at 3:30 pm and Saturdays at 10:50 am. See the summer schedule for summer hours. All students are required to swipe in on the student computer using their ID cards when they arrive at the Center, and swipe out when they leave. ID cards must be worn at all times while in Sitar Arts Center. **Students who do not swipe in or sign in at arrival will be considered absent.** Students coming to Sitar Arts Center who do not have their ID cards with them, must sign their names in the 'Student sign-in log', writing time signed in and out. When signing in, students must check one of the following columns, "Forgot ID", "Lost ID", "Need ID" or "Need Picture". Students who do not have ID's will be given a Sitar Arts Center sticker to wear while in the building for that day. Students needing to meet their practice requirements are also required to swipe/sign in prior to practicing and log out when finished. This will allow Sitar Arts Center staff to monitor who is in the building. Please sign in whether or not you are registered for a class or lesson that day.

Please note that an absence is considered excused when a student calls the Center, before noon, to let us know that he/she is not coming for classes on a given day. You will not be charged any fee for an excused absence but you will not be eligible for perfect attendance.

Students should not arrive more than 30 minutes before their classes begin. We ask that students DO NOT roam the halls, rather, they should: practice their instruments, complete their music theory requirements, work on art projects, read, complete their school work, or



ask for ways they can contribute to and around the Center. When students repeatedly arrive early, Sitar staff reserves the right to enroll them in a class that occurs during their wait time.

## **5. Late Policy**

Students are required to notify Sitar Arts Center if they will be late for their lesson, class or workshop. If students are not in their classroom at the time their class begins, they are considered late, even if the student is in the building. If a student is tardy more than 3 times without calling, the student may be removed from classes until further notice.

## **6. Missed Lessons**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled lessons, classes and workshops for which they register. Sitar Arts Center is not obligated to reschedule make-up lessons, classes or workshops for those missed due to student non-attendance, illness, vacation etc. In the event of a Sitar Center closure or cancellation by an instructor, a make-up date may be scheduled at the Arts instructor's discretion. Please see Attendance Requirements for more information on this matter.

## **7. Performance and Exhibit Opportunities**

All students have the opportunity to perform or exhibit their work at the end of each semester during our student showcase weeks. At the conclusion of each semester, students with the advisement and approval of their teachers may choose one piece prepared during that same semester to perform/exhibit. Works of art will be displayed in the gallery with a reception as a kick-off to student showcase week. Student artwork may also be exhibited throughout the year in the Sitar Arts Center gallery. Student art work created at Sitar Arts Center is the property of the student and should be taken home at the end of the semester. (Sitar Arts Center is not responsible for items left at the end of the semester.)

## **8. Auditions**

An audition is required for participants to be included as performers and/or exhibitors in the winter, spring or summer showcases. All students in all performance disciplines are encouraged to audition to perform. Auditions will be held three weeks before performance week at the Center, typically during the scheduled class or lesson time. Students must be signed up by their teachers in order to audition and perform during performance week.

**There is no minimum skill level required for an audition. The audition is meant to mandate preparedness and commitment at the student's appropriate level. Pieces/ensembles must be practiced and polished; taking the audition seriously means taking the performance seriously.**

## **9. Use of Instruments, Rooms and Materials**

Students registering for music instruction at Sitar Arts Center will be assigned an instrument. Instruments are to be used only by those assigned to them. The student is responsible for their assigned instrument. **Instruments may not be loaned to another student under any**

**circumstances.** Unless consent from the Sitar Arts Center administration is given, **no instrument is to be taken out of the Center.** Permission to take an instrument off the premises can only be granted by Sitar Arts Center staff upon completion of an instrument loan agreement. This agreement must be completed by a parent/guardian for students under the age of 18.

If a student is interested in trying a new instrument or art form, speak with someone from our staff to arrange a time to visit with a class/instructor or attend one of our open house events.

**-The instrument storage room,** all instruments and practice studios are off limits to those not registered for music instruction. Students enrolled in the music program will have an instrument assigned to them. **Pianos in the building are only to be played by students registered for piano instruction or other music students with special staff permission.**

**-The Art Studios and materials** are off limits to those not registered in an art class. Art students must receive permission from an art instructor or Sitar Arts Center staff to use the studios and materials outside of class time. Open blades such as X-Acto knives, mat cutters and utility knives are not permitted.

**-The Photography darkroom** and materials are off limits to those not registered in photography. Photography students must receive permission from a photography instructor and a Sitar Arts Center staff member to use the lab and materials outside of class time.

**-The Ensemble room** and its materials are off limits to those not registered in a music ensemble or music lessons. Percussion students must receive permission from a percussion instructor or Sitar Arts Center staff member to use percussion instruments outside of class time.

**-The Dressing rooms** are off limits to those not registered in dance or drama classes.

**-The Dance studio** is off limits to those not registered in dance or movement classes. **You are not to wear street shoes in the dance studio,** you are only to wear footwear approved by your instructor or no shoes at all. Sitar Arts Center will provide ballet, jazz and tap shoes for registered dance students.

**-The Multimedia room** may only be used by those registered in digital arts classes, creative writing or music lessons requiring music theory study. Under no circumstance is the technology room to be used without a supervisor in the room. Computers are only to be used for Sitar Arts Center related activities such as classes or music theory. **Computers are not available for homework or general internet use.** Please check with your school to find out about local computer availability.

**Music books and music theory books** are provided by Sitar Arts Center and are only to be used at the Center unless the student purchases the book. If books are lost by the student, a \$10 fee will be charged.

**Music folders** are given to students enrolled in private music instruction. These folders store your music/theory books, practice assignments and notes. Each student's music folder is numbered and is kept in the instrument storage room.

**All rooms and materials are not to be used without supervision or expressed consent from Sitar Arts Center staff.**

**Sitar Arts Center reserves the right to dismiss any student due to noncompliance with any of these policies.**

Rooms will be locked at all times when not in use by a class and checked periodically. When using rooms for practice or projects, be sure you have permission to use the room and its materials, and to clean up after use.

## 10. General Rules

- **Kids may not leave the building unless they are logged out for the day and are going home.**
- **Kids may not open the door for anyone!**
- **Meals are not permitted in the Sitar Arts Center, this includes any kind of fast food, bags of chips, sodas, candy or any food not brought from home.** Sitar Arts Center does provide a healthy snack and fruit provided by D.C. Central Kitchen, for those students who need a bite to eat until they get home from classes. Students with special food needs, allergies or concerns should discuss these issues with Sitar Arts Center staff.
- **Sitar Arts Center is a cell phone free zone.** Cell phones are not to be used in Sitar Arts Center unless you are calling parents and have permission to do so. This includes TXT messaging and taking photos. Telephones must be turned off during classes and performances. We do have a courtesy phone for local calls only.
- **No food, drinks or gum are permitted beyond the Kids Café area.**
- **Students must bring something to do or create something to do while waiting before and after class, students may not wander the halls.**
- **No Running**
- **Students found name calling or committing any act of deliberate negativity against other students, teachers, volunteers, parents or staff members will suffer the consequence of a phone call to parents or guardian. Negative behavior could result in suspension from all classes or lessons.**
- **Vandalism of any kind will not be tolerated in or outside Sitar Arts Center and can result in immediate suspension.** Damages will be paid for by responsible parties.

## 11. Safety indoors and outdoors

Sitar Arts Center is steadfast in keeping our building safe, inside and out. To maintain a safe environment, we ask students to abide by the following guidelines in and around the Center:

- **It is the responsibility of all teachers to: teach students how to use (and store) appropriate tools safely and to monitor students continuously during tool**

**use.** Even tools such as scissors, paint brushes, and pencils can cause injury if handled and stored improperly.

- All art tools must be approved in advance by Sitar Arts Center staff for both safety and age appropriate classroom use. Advanced tools (i.e. X-Acto knives, etc.) may not be used by young students (under the age of 14). Students age 14 and above must have signed parent/guardian permission to use the advanced tools and must be trained by their teacher in appropriate tool use and storage. The following are examples of advanced tools:
  - X-Acto knives
  - box cutters
  - mat knives
  - any open blade
  - saws
  - power tools
  - hot glue guns
  - spray paint
- Lights must be kept on at all times while students are in classes
- Always check with Sitar Arts Center staff if using a room for any reason other than a supervised class or lesson
- Practice room windows must be kept open and uncovered with light on
- Shoes must be worn at all times (except in the dance studio and dressing room)
- No running
- No physical contact of any kind
- Always sign in upon arrival and sign out when exiting Sitar Arts Center
- Students should not open the front door for anyone

Safety is very important to us and Sitar Arts Center will be locked at all times. Students, parents and guests will be buzzed in by a staff member.

Students and parents are asked not to open the main door to let people in the building. Only staff members are to open doors for visitors.

To maintain an orderly environment, students should be at Sitar Arts Center only for scheduled lessons, practice or scheduled events. If students are in Sitar Arts Center for any other purpose, he/she will be sent home.

As you know, we have limited space at the Center. If you ride your bike or scooter to class, please lock it up outside so that we can keep the front area clear for students, parents and guests.

## **12. Reporting Harassment**

Sitar Arts Center does not tolerate harassment of any kind. Any student who feels that he or she is being bullied, teased, taunted, discriminated against or sexually harassed (verbally or physically) should immediately report the incident to the Executive Director, Student Affairs and Outreach Director or Senior Director of Programs. Sitar Arts Center will take immediate steps to investigate the situation and to stop the harassment.

### 13. Emergency Preparedness

In the case of an emergency where it is unsafe to leave the building, everyone at Sitar Arts Center will be asked to move into the dance studio and theater until it is deemed safe to leave. Students will remain at Sitar Arts Center unless a parent or guardian collects them. Every effort will be made to maintain communication with parents through the phone, email and internet. Information about students' security and location can be obtained by calling (202) 797-2145. If your child takes a prescription medication that they may need during an emergency situation, a dosage may be provided to Sitar Arts Center. For more information on Sitar Arts Center's Emergency Preparedness Strategy, please inquire in the office.

#### **C. Parent/Guardian responsibility**

It is the vision of the Sitar Arts Center that everyone who walks in the door will be actively involved in our mission. We see our Center as a place where we all support the children and youth of our community and demonstrate that support by participating in strengthening the program in a number of ways. In addition, we can serve as role models for how to use leisure time in a productive, constructive, relaxing, expressive way.

##### **1. Childcare**

The staff and teachers at Sitar Arts Center care deeply about the well-being of all students and we do not have the staff capacity to provide childcare outside of lessons and classes. To keep Sitar Arts Center a welcoming and orderly environment, **students should be at Sitar Arts Center only for a scheduled class/lesson, to practice or attend scheduled events. If a student does not have a class or is not signed in to practice, he/she may be asked to leave.**

Sitar Arts Center does not monitor drop-off or pick-up of students and is not responsible for making sure that your child is dropped off before class or picked up after class by an appropriate adult. **That is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.** The parent or guardian must arrive at Sitar Arts Center by the conclusion of the child's class, so that he/she leaves with the appropriate adult and does not leave the building unaccompanied. **Please drop off your children on time for class and pick them up promptly. This ensures that your child will be well cared for before and after his/her class.**

Since we do not provide childcare, we ask students not to arrive more than 30 minutes before his/her class. We ask that students **DO NOT** roam the halls or just sit, rather, they should: practice their instruments or other art form, complete their music theory requirements, read, complete their school work or ask for ways that they can contribute to and around the Sitar Center.

##### **2. Early Drop-off /Late Pick Up**

Due to limited space and priority seating for youth, we ask that parents come no more than 15 early to drop off students for classes or lessons. Because we care about child safety, it is extremely important that parents pick up their children on time. The staff cannot stay at Sitar Arts Center after closing time to wait for parents to pick up their children.

### **Children under 12:**

There will be a penalty imposed on parents who do not pick up their children under the age of 12 on time. Students must be picked up by Sitar Arts Center's closing time. If a child under 12 is not picked up by closing time, **we extend a 15 minute grace period, and then charge \$50.00 to the late parent/guardian. An additional \$50 will be charged every 15 minutes thereafter.**

If children are not picked up from Sitar Arts Center within 90 minutes after closing, students will be taken to the nearest police precinct for safekeeping and their parents will be fined \$150. If the fine is not paid, the student's enrollment will be terminated, and the student will not be permitted to re-enroll until the fine is paid.

### **Children 12 and older:**

Parents of children who are 12 or older must also pick up their children or direct their children on how to return home by themselves. The release of children who are 12 or older will not be monitored by Sitar Arts Center. Children who are 12 or older will be required to leave Sitar Arts Center building at closing regardless of whether a parent is coming to pick them up.

**Students leaving the building are expected to go home and not return to Sitar Arts Center.**

**Sitar Arts Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment of any student for violation of this policy or any other policy stated in this handbook.**

## **3. Field Trips**

Washington, DC is rich in cultural opportunities and has much to offer in artistic experience. Many of the classes at Sitar Arts Center provide students with opportunities for field trips to our city's fine cultural institutions. Examples of field trips are live concerts at the Washington National Zoo, plays at Arena Stage and the Nutcracker performed by The Washington Ballet.

For every outing, Sitar Arts Center will send a permission slip with the student. It is required that the parent/guardian sign the permission slip before the field trip departure date. **Students will not be permitted to go on a field trip without a signed permission slip.** All field trips will depart from Sitar Arts Center unless otherwise stated. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to see that students going on field trips arrive at Sitar Arts Center prior to the specified time of field trip departure. Sitar Arts Center is not obligated to wait for any student if they are late. Please be sure that students are met at Sitar Arts Center by a parent/guardian upon the specified return time.

Sitar Arts Center is not responsible for making sure that students are picked up after a field trip by an appropriate adult.

Students registering for photography classes are required to have a permission slip signed by parents to allow them to leave the building to take photographs.

#### **4. Parent involvement**

In addition to volunteers from the community, we encourage involvement from the parents and other family members of participating students. Support from home is key to the success of our students and parents are critical in ensuring that their children get the best education possible. By assisting with special events, administrative needs, and maintenance tasks, parents help make it possible for the Center to continue to offer low cost, quality arts education to the community.

There are a variety of ways members can participate at the Center, including monitoring students, bringing snacks, cleaning, assisting with fundraising, helping with arts and crafts projects, making phone calls, and more. There are also opportunities to teach, attend performances, and participate in special A.R.T.S. Circle events.

Everyone is welcome to participate in A.R.T.S. Circle, which stands for "Assist and Reflect Through Service." Sitar Arts Center asks that at least one adult per family sign up for a group.

Sitar Arts Center also highly values opportunities for children to create art with their parents and other primary caregiving adults. If a teacher designs a class that is open for children and adults, parents who would like to participate must enroll in that class as a student. If a class is not designated for children and parents, we ask that parents do not attend their children's classes.

If a parent would like to volunteer teach or co-teach, please contact Lorraine to see what volunteer teaching openings are available and to get a volunteer application form. A TB test and background check is required for all adults supervising the children in the classroom. (Informal assistant teaching is discouraged as every volunteer that works with children at Sitar is required to have a background check.)

If a teacher would like to invite a parent or other adult to assistant teach, they should alert Lorraine (Senior Director of Programs) and then direct the parent to Lorraine or David so that they may officially apply to volunteer.

#### **D. Registration**

##### **1. Enrollment**

Because Sitar Arts Center is a community center, preferred enrollment goes to students who live in the Adams Morgan, Mount Pleasant and Columbia Heights neighborhoods. Students may enroll for arts classes at Sitar Arts Center three times each year, in the fall/winter, spring and summer semesters. The registration period for enrollment takes place during the four weeks before classes begin each semester. Both new and returning students must make a registration appointment before registration begins. Returning students are given priority enrollment and register during the first week. New student enrollment begins the second week.

Sitar Arts Center admits new students outside of our immediate target areas if space permits. It is Sitar Arts Center's mission and policy that 80% of students are from low income homes each semester. Students from higher income families will be placed on a wait list. Please call (202) 797-2145 for dates of registration and to make an appointment. If you cannot come to your scheduled appointment, you must call Sitar Arts Center in advance to reschedule your appointment. However, if students miss their first appointment we cannot hold a space in a class. We do not hold spots in a class for returning students if you miss your registration appointment.

### **How to Register:**

To register for classes at the Sitar Arts Center, students must:

1. Live in Washington, DC
2. Make a registration appointment by calling (202) 797-2145 during specified times.

All students must bring the following to registration appointments:

1. Students must be accompanied by an adult.
2. \$15 registration fee (all other fees, if any, will be assessed at time of registration)

Students must call Sitar Arts Center at (202) 797-2145 to make a registration appointment before every semester. Due to enrollment limitations, all new students, higher-income families/individuals, and those living outside our target communities may be placed on a waiting list for classes. Returning students, **not including those enrolled during summer classes**, receive first priority for classroom spaces and private lessons. New students can only register during the second week of the registration period and prior to the beginning of the semester. The first week of registration is reserved for returning students. Sitar Arts Center is excited to enroll more new students in semesters to come, as Sitar Arts Center continues to grow and offer more classes and lessons.

Students may not register if the student has an outstanding balance from a previous semester.

Any student / family with concerns about payments can discuss the possibility of a payment plan when registering. No student will be turned away for inability to pay.

### **How to Register for Private Lessons:**

Due to the number of students wanting private lessons and due to the level of commitment involved in private lessons, like required music theory tutoring and of course our practice requirements, private lesson students must be at least 7 years old. Returning Sitar Arts Center music lesson students get first priority for lessons. Other returning Sitar Arts Center students (who have not had private lessons) are next in line for private lessons. If there are no available lessons, students are put on the 'Private Lesson Interest List' at time of registration and will be considered as openings occur. New Students to Sitar Arts Center will not be considered for private lessons, as we hold our private lesson students to high standards, we ask that new students of Sitar Arts Center show they can be on time for their other classes and complete a successful semester at Sitar Arts Center before we consider him or her for private lessons.



## **2. Sliding Fee Scale**

Sitar Arts Center is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. In support of the Center's mission, it is our policy that each semester 80% of our students are from low-income households, defined as 50% or less of the median household income for the greater Washington, DC area. The median income varies depending upon the household's number of people.

Family tuition is determined on a sliding fee scale in order to ensure that the programs remain affordable for all families of the community. The Center will never make a profit from student tuition or fees, which serve as a small contribution to the greater cost of operating Sitar Arts Center.

The cost of classes at Sitar Arts Center is very inexpensive compared with other arts organizations in our area. It is the highest priority of Sitar Arts Center to provide a tuition scale that is affordable to everyone, and that no one will ever be turned away because of inability to pay.

## **3. Cancellation, Schedule Changes, Withdrawal, Refunds, and Dismissal**

If a class or workshop has insufficient enrollment, Sitar Arts Center reserves the right to cancel that class or workshop. In some cases, under-enrolled classes may proceed if approved by Sitar Arts Center administration.

**All cancellations and schedule changes made by students must be made in writing. If you wish to change your schedule please fill out a 'drop/add' form found at the front desk. Changes will not be made without this form. Notice of withdrawal from instruction must be made to Sitar Arts Center administration in writing.** This written notice of withdrawal must include the name of the student, name of parent or guardian and the name of the class or lesson.

**Please understand that verbal notices or request from students and parents cannot be accepted.**

If we receive a student's withdrawal notice before the last day of new and returning student registration, students will be refunded full tuition, not including the \$15 registration fee. If we receive a withdrawal notice before late registration, you will receive 50% of your tuition payment not including the \$15 registration fee. No refunds or balance adjustments are given after late registration.

## **4. Tuition Payments and Billing**

At the time of registration, students are expected to pay a \$15 registration fee. All other tuition fees are based on your family income and assessed during your registration appointment. For those who can not pay the tuition fee at the time of registration, two payment plans are offered. Every month an invoice will be sent until all outstanding balances are paid. Students who have received unexcused absence fees or have gotten a fee for not meeting their practice requirements will also receive an invoice every month until all fees are paid. Students who have a previous balance from a previous semester may not be permitted

to register for forthcoming semesters until all fees are paid, or a payment plan is scheduled and approved.

**Sitar Arts Center reserves the right to dismiss any student due to multiple absences, frequent tardiness, overdue payments, disciplinary reasons and/or noncompliance with Sitar Arts Center policies.**

Those not registered for classes at Sitar Arts Center are not permitted in the building beyond the lobby without Sitar Arts Center approval unless accompanied by Sitar Center Staff or an instructor.

---

Thank you for your interest and participation in celebrating kids, arts and community here at Sitar Arts Center.

**We are so glad that you are studying the arts at Sitar Arts Center this semester. Enjoy!**