



Program Manual

This revision of the SSSPI Program Manual, approved by the membership on May 24, 2001, was produced by the 2000-2001 SSSPI Board of Directors:

Marcella Bidulka	John Lavery
Karen Bindle	James Legge
Agata Czajkowski	James Lokken
Bev Drew	Julia McFarlane
Leonard Herrem	Lorraine Mastromatteo
Lillian Jen-Payzant	John Payzant
Philip Kashap	Doug Thorpe
Margaret Kyle	Bernadette Wilson
Kim Larsen	

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Preamble:

This Program Manual is intended to function as a guide for the Saskatoon Suzuki String Program Inc. In June of 1986 the then existing organization: Suzuki Talent Education – Saskatoon Symphony Society (STE – SSS) separated itself from the Saskatoon Symphony Society and was incorporated under a new name: Saskatoon Suzuki String Program Inc. (SSSPI). With this incorporation, complete operative control of the program was provided for within the SSSPI and equal autonomy established between teachers and parents through equal representation on the Board of Directors.

I. Name

The full name of the program shall be the Saskatoon Suzuki String Program Inc., or abbreviated as the SSSPI.

II. Objectives

The objectives of the SSSPI are:

A. Suzuki Methods

To conduct its affairs in such a way as to provide quality musical education to children using the principles and methods developed by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki.

B. Music Education

To finance and administer instruction in all aspects of music education through tuition fees, grants, and any other appropriate financial assistance.

C. Music Appreciation

To encourage and promote musical appreciation among children and parents in Saskatoon.

D. Community Relations

To maintain ongoing relationships with the musical community in Saskatoon and Saskatchewan towards the furtherance of musical education. This shall include, but not be restricted to, joint activities, performances, promotions, associations, memberships, recruitment or other such activities as shall be in the interests of the musical community and the SSSPI.

III. Accomplishing Objectives

The objectives of the SSSPI shall be accomplished by:

A. Employment

Engaging and employing on such terms as the SSSPI Board of Directors may decide, instructors and any other persons required in instructional, administrative, and advisory or custodial purposes in connection with the aforesaid programs, and in connection with the business of the SSSPI.

B. Cooperation and Affiliation

Cooperating and seeking affiliation with other organizations whose objectives in the opinion of the Board are similar to and further those of the SSSPI.

C. Fee Structure

Establishing an equitable student fee structure to cover costs of instruction and facilities.

D. Financial Assistance

Seeking and obtaining financial assistance from government and private agencies.

E. Parent Orientation

Ensuring that all new parents to the program attend a Parent Orientation Meeting held as soon as possible in the fall of each program year. At this meeting, new parents shall be informed of the philosophy, goals, objectives, expectations and policies of the SSSPI.

F. Communication and Conflict Resolution

Communicating to parents and demonstrating the importance of good parent-student-teacher relationships. Two policies related to this point are herein stated:

1. The program will make every attempt to accommodate the specific needs of all students with respect to teacher preference. Equally, the teachers have the right to decide whether or not a specific student shall continue or discontinue study with him/her based on a decision as to whether or not the pupil is achieving success because of the type of pupil-teacher-parent relationship which exists.
2. If a problem or concern should arise with the program, a 3-part resolution process is to be followed:
 - a) The first step in resolving any difficulties is for the parent and teacher to discuss these.
 - b) In the event that the parent and teacher are unable to satisfactorily resolve the issue, the Program Director and/or President are available to act as a neutral party to help mediate any disagreement.

- c) If the parent or teacher is not satisfied with the resolution of the problem, the Program Director will be obliged to raise the issue with the Board, where the concerns will be dealt with at the policy level.

IV. Operations

A. Membership

Any parent or guardian of a student taking regular instruction and whose fees are fully up-to-date and all teachers in the program are considered members of the SSSPI.

B. Fees

Each year prior to the Annual General Meeting the Board will set fees, registration procedures, and program guidelines for the following year. All fees for returning students must be paid in full to the Registrar as scheduled each year to maintain ongoing membership and priority for lessons. New members are required to make full payment with submission of their registration.

Family Registration Fee

The Family Registration Fee is payable at the time of registration, is non-refundable, and shall serve as membership in both SSSPI and the Saskatchewan Orchestra Association. The program shall provide fundraising opportunities for members to earn credits toward the following year's fees. Parents who serve on the Board of Directors earn a special credit, granted during the first year of service on the board. Once a Board member has served for two years the special credit is converted to a lifetime credit.

Group Lesson Fee

- a) The Group Lesson Fee may be paid in full with a cheque post-dated to September 1, or it may be paid in two installments with cheques post-dated to September 1 and January 1.
- b) In the event of withdrawal, application for refund must be made in writing to the Registrar.
- c) A 10% discount will be given to the third and subsequent children from the same family registered during the same year.

Orchestra Fee

The Orchestra Fee must be paid by post-dated cheque for September 1. Refunds may be granted no later than September 30, upon written application to Registrar.

C. Membership Meetings

Membership meetings are to be called by the SSSPI Board upon giving a minimum of four weeks written notice to each member. A minimum of one meeting per year must be held and that meeting would be designated as the annual general meeting (AGM). The AGM will be held during the month of November each year. A quorum shall consist of 20% of the paid up members of the membership list. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority vote.

D. Elections

1. The Board of Directors of the SSSPI, also referred to as the Board, shall consist of all teachers within the program and an equal number of parents to be elected annually by the general membership. Where possible, the parents shall elect their representatives so as to represent parents of viola, cello and violin students.
2. Parent Board members shall be elected for a term of two years commencing immediately. Retiring members will be encouraged to attend one meeting of the new Board.
3. The Board will be required to nominate at least one name for each vacant parent position on the Board. Further nominations may be made from the floor during the AGM.
4. A parent member may be re-elected for a maximum of four consecutive terms of which no more than two should be in the same position. Every effort should be made to have an even rotation of new parent members on the Board.

E. Board of Directors

1. The number of voting parents sitting on the Board of Directors shall always equal the number of teachers on the Board. In the event that additional teachers shall be employed within the program, an equal number of parents shall be appointed by the Board until the next election. Similarly, in the event that the number of teachers shall be decreased, the number of parents shall likewise be reduced. Parents who have been removed from the Board in this fashion will lose voting privileges, and they will not be required to attend the Board meetings.
2. In addition to the Board of Directors, additional parent volunteers may be enlisted to assist with administrative and organizational tasks. Ad hoc committees may be struck to handle such tasks, provided that a Board member chairs the committee.
3. The Board positions for which parents shall be elected will include the following:
 - a) President
 - b) Vice-President
 - c) Treasurer
 - d) Registrar
 - e) Secretary
 - f) Fundraising Coordinator
 - g) Instrument Convenor
 - h) Social Convenor
 - i) Piano Convenor

4. In the event a position becomes vacant during the year, the remaining members may appoint another member for the unexpired portion of the term. The Board may declare a position vacant if a parent member is unable to attend two or more consecutive meetings. A quorum will consist of ½ the members. Decisions will be made by a simple majority vote of those present.
5. One Board member shall act as liaison to the Saskatchewan Orchestral Association by offering to serve on the SOA Board. Normally, the President shall fill this role, but another Board member may serve as the President's designate.
6. The Board shall meet on average ten times per year.

F. Duties

1. No individual member of the Board shall take actions or represent opinions as being those of the Board unless such actions or opinions are agreed upon by the Board. In extraordinary circumstances, individual Board members may be called upon to act or express opinions on issues on which the Board has not yet agreed to take action. In such circumstances it is incumbent upon the Board member to seek advice and opinion from as many members of the Board as possible before acting or expressing opinions. The Board member shall then identify and report such actions taken or opinions expressed at the next meeting of the Board. Actions taken or expressed in such cases shall be those which provide the least commitment on behalf of the organization as can be made. Executive members who do not conform to their responsibilities as identified above shall be open to a vote of censure by the Board. Repeat occurrences may be cause for removal from their Board positions by a majority vote of the Board.
2. The day to day operation of the program shall be the responsibility of the Program Director and the teachers. Policy issues and decision with respect to budgets, fees and other general issues shall be decided by a majority vote.
3. The general duties of the Board shall be to conduct the regular business of the SSSPI and to provide an annual report to the membership, including an annual financial review.
4. All members of the Board of Directors (including both teachers and parents, but excluding the President) may vote on all matters pertaining to the business of the SSSPI and which are brought up at the Board Meetings. Teachers on the Board may not vote on issues pertaining to salary, professional development funding, and issues pertaining to hiring and dismissal of teachers. However, the three aforementioned issues may not be brought to a vote before prior consultation and negotiation with the teachers on those issues has taken place.
5. Specific Duties of Parent Board Members:

President

- a) The **President** will preside at membership and Board meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall preside and in the absence of both, a chairperson may be appointed by the members present. The President shall be responsible for new Board member orientation, and, with the Program Director and the Treasurer, for ensuring all SOA reports and applications are completed. The president will either offer to serve on the SOA Board, or designate another Board member to do so.

Vice-President

- b) The **Vice-President** shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence or inability to act. The Vice-President books all facility rentals and is in charge of publicity for the SSSPI. The Vice-President ensures that a piano is available on all occasions when it is needed. In consultation with other Board members, the Vice-President will be responsible for nominating a slate of candidates for vacant Board positions at the AGM.

Treasurer

- c) The **Treasurer** shall record all monies due to the SSSPI, and be responsible for said funds which shall be deposited in the name of the SSSPI in such bank or place of deposit as the Board designates. He/she shall keep proper records and books of account, showing the disposition of funds that may pass through the Treasurer's hands. The Treasurer shall make a full report in writing covering the financial condition of the SSSPI at each annual meeting and at such times as may be required by the Board. In the absence of the Treasurer, a written report shall be furnished by the President. The Treasurer shall ensure that prompt salary payments are made. The Treasurer shall ensure that non-profit status is maintained, and shall assist in the financial review of the organization. The Treasurer may request other members to assist in completing his required duties.

Registrar

- d) The **Registrar** shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining all membership information. The most recent and up-to-date member information will be obtainable from the Registrar. To accomplish this, all changes should be conveyed as quickly as possible to the Registrar. A complete membership list shall be issued to all members by October 1st of each year. All information and membership lists are for the use of the SSSPI and its members only.

Secretary

- e) The **Secretary** shall take minutes of all Board meetings and distribute them promptly. He/she will also record minutes of the AGM. In the absence of the Secretary, a Recording Secretary would be appointed. The Secretary will be responsible for publishing a newsletter four times a year.

Fundraising Coordinator

- f) The **Fundraising Coordinator** shall organize and coordinate fundraising events as determined by the Board each year. He/she shall monitor the credits earned toward member fees and pass this information on to the Registrar before registration.

Instrument Convenor

- g) The **Instrument Convenor** shall arrange for the purchase of cellos as instructed by the Board. He/she will receive written and signed rental agreements and keep a record of all rental instruments, fees, conditions, etc. He/she will ensure instruments are returned in the original condition and if not, arrange immediate repair and invoicing of the parents.

Social Convenor

- h) The **Social Convenor** arranges social events as determined by the Board. This includes purchasing sufficient food (within the limits of the Social budget) and coordinating volunteers for setup and cleanup at these events.

Piano Convenor

- i) The **Piano Convenor** works with the Program Director to arrange accompanists for Solo Days and Concerts.

If, after all parent positions on the Board are taken up and convenor positions are still open, those positions are to be filled by volunteers who will not sit on the Board. A convenor may request other volunteer members to assist and form a subcommittee to complete required duties.

6. Orientation of New Board Members

The President shall ensure that each outgoing Board member fully briefs his/her replacement. To assist in this briefing, all Board members are required to keep his/her own permanent accurate record of activities and samples of form used. This information is to be passed on to their replacements.

V. Schedule

A schedule of monthly activities (including concerts, solo days, meetings and orientations) for each year in the Suzuki Program shall be the responsibility of the Program Director. The schedule, when completed by the Program Director, shall be ratified by the Board at its June meeting.

VI. Accounting and Audit

A. Budgeting

The Treasurer will be responsible for preparing and recommending a budget to the Board of Directors.

B. Bank Accounts

The Treasurer shall establish suitable bank accounts as directed by the Board. All accounts must have three signing authorities: President, Vice-President, and Treasurer, two of which must appear on all cheques. All cheques must be written in consecutive order. The primary account shall be the “General Account” which shall be used for day-to-day operations and designated by the bank accordingly. Any amounts on deposit over payment requirements for next month should be transferred to an interest-bearing account.

C. Audit

The Treasurer shall maintain financial records on an up-to-date basis and provide monthly summary written reports to the Board of Directors. To permit current reporting to the AGM the fiscal year-end shall be August 30 of each year. Upon completion of the fiscal year end the treasurer shall submit the complete record of the financial books for appropriate audit.

VII. Music Instruction Program

A. Program Director

The Program Director will be appointed by the Board to a fixed term of up to five years. With the agreement of both the Board and the Program Director, the term is renewable. The Program Director will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the program and ensure that regular music instruction using the Suzuki method is being adhered to by all teachers. The responsibilities of the Program Director include:

1. Teaching – If any major concerns or complaints regarding teaching methods or problems with students should arise, the issue should be handled by the Program Director and/or the President, as per bylaw II-F-2.
2. Personnel – The Program Director will be responsible for the supervision of teaching personnel. This includes assisting in the search and advertising for replacements or new Teachers and future Program Directors. The Program Director will define and maintain an appropriate level of proficiency of instruction within the teaching staff of the program.
3. Records – The Program Director will keep accurate records of the work performed by the Teachers, and will communicate directly with the Treasurer on a monthly basis to ensure timely payments are made.
4. Scheduling – In consultation with the Teachers, the Program Director will schedule group lessons, promotional performances, and other playing ensembles. The group lesson schedules should be submitted to the Board for approval prior to finalizing. The scheduling of individual lessons will be the responsibility of each teacher.
5. Student Placement – In consultation with the teachers, the Program Director shall place students in appropriate group lessons and orchestras.
6. Concerts – The Program Director will co-ordinate all public performances with the Vice-President and in consultation with the Teachers. In Consultation with the Teachers, the Program Director will select the music for each concert, keeping in mind timing and proficiency level of each group of students.
7. Parent Orientation – The Program Director will ensure that two Parent Orientation Inservices take place each year, one before the end of September, and one in mid-winter.
8. Transition – When a new Program Director is appointed, the outgoing Program Director will hand over all relevant records and ensure that the new Program Director is properly briefed.

B. Teachers

The Teachers will assist the Program Director in all aspects of the Saskatoon Suzuki String Program. The Teachers are responsible for following the spirit and the principles of the Suzuki method of string education. The duties of the Teachers include but are not limited to the following:

1. Teaching – The Teachers will teach their assigned individual and group lessons in the program, using the Suzuki Method of music instruction. The Teachers will maintain the level of instructional proficiency requested by the Program Director.
2. Scheduling – The Teachers will assist the Program Director in scheduling group lessons. The Teachers will schedule their own students for private lessons.
3. Student Placement – The Teachers will assist the Program Director in placing students in appropriate groups and orchestras.
4. Concerts – The Teachers will assist the Director in determining the musical program for concerts and will assist at all rehearsals and concerts.
5. Instructional Materials – The Teachers will assess their students for proper instrument size. Orchestra leaders will be responsible for selecting appropriate music for their orchestras.
6. Fee Collection – The Teachers shall collect on an individual basis fees from their students for private lessons.

C. Priority

The Board will be expected to make every effort to ensure that every student desiring to do so be given opportunity to take group and private lesson instruction. Adequate numbers of teachers are to be hired to permit full instruction. However, there may be a time when this simply is not possible and therefore it will be necessary to establish priorities for available private lesson openings. In this event the following would apply: Priority Number:

1. Continuing students of the SSSPI, provided they have met the registration deadline.
2. New students of parents who have other children enrolled.
3. New students of parents that are paid up members of SSSPI. Earliest date on receipt would provide for further priority.

D. Assignment of New Students

Whenever the Program is asked to assign new students to Teachers, and the Program has more than one teacher for a certain instrument, a priority system based on seniority shall be established for the teachers of that instrument. In the case of new violin students, for example, the system would work as follows:

1. the first new violin student of the year is offered to the most senior violin teacher;
 - a) if that teacher **accepts** the student, the teacher then moves to the bottom of the violin priority list;
 - b) if that teacher **declines** the student, the student is offered to the second most senior violin teacher, but the most senior violin teacher remains at the top of the violin priority list;
 - c) if both the two most senior teachers decline, then we keep moving down the list. The teacher who accepts the student moves to the bottom of the list, while all the declining teachers retain their priority.
2. the second new violin student of the year is offered to the teacher currently at the top of the priority list, and the same system as described above then operates;
3. once all the violin teachers have accepted a new student, the system cycles back to step one, with the next new student being offered to the most senior teacher, and so on;
4. every effort will be made to expedite this process.

E. Rental Premises

The Vice-President will arrange for appropriate space for group lessons. Parents shall be responsible for any damage caused by students while on the premises.

F. Lesson Schedule

All students must participate in both private and group lessons. Students taking both private and group lessons may join an orchestra when they are ready. Students wishing to continue in orchestra must continue group lessons as well, though an exemption may, with the approval of the Board, be granted to senior students. Private lessons will be available for 1/2, 3/4, and one hour periods. Group lessons will be for one hour with approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour instrument playing time. The number of group lessons per year will be established by the program Director in consultation with the Teachers and ratified by the Board.

G. Termination of Lessons

The student may, at any time, give notice of termination or withdrawal from the program. However, it is necessary to give at least 4 full weeks notice in writing to the Teacher and the Registrar. When no notice is given, the student is required to pay for the 4 missed private lessons. No part of the registration fee is refundable. Students who withdraw from group lessons during the first term may be refunded the second half of the group lesson fee.

H. Termination of Employment

If a teacher in the SSSPI at any time wishes to terminate employment with the program, written notice must be submitted to the Board at least four weeks in advance of termination. If possible, advance notice would be preferred three months prior to termination date.

VIII. Amendments

A. Notice

Before any action can be taken to amend this manual, a notice of motion clearly stating the amendment must be given at a Board meeting at least four weeks prior to a general membership meeting.

B. Procedure:

1. The notice must be distributed to all members as part of the minutes two weeks prior to the next general membership meeting.
2. The motion to amend the manual may then be considered at the general membership meeting where it may be carried or defeated by a majority vote.