





Music Education for All

701 Quincy Street, Suite 1
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Rapid City, SD 57701
 

November 17, 2025

Dear Black Hills Studios of the Arts Families,

We hope this message finds you well. As we look ahead to the Spring Semester beginning in **January 2026**, we want to speak to you honestly and transparently about something that has weighed heavily on us as a nonprofit arts organization.

At Black Hills Studios of the Arts, our mission has always been to make music education accessible to everyone—regardless of age, ability, or financial circumstance: Music For All. We work hard to keep our rates far below the area average, and we rely on fundraising, grants, donations, and community support to help make that possible.

However, in these challenging times, fundraising alone is no longer sufficient to sustain our programs, cover our overhead, retain exceptional instructors, and continue serving our students at the level they deserve. After months of discussion, budgeting, and searching for alternatives, we have reached a difficult but necessary decision: **beginning Spring Semester 2026, our lesson prices will increase.**

New Spring Semester Rates

- **½ hour lessons:** \$640 Spring semester
*Increase of \$210 from previous spring semester
(Breakdown: about \$42 more per month)*
- **1 hour lessons:** \$960 Spring semester
*Increase of \$310 from previous spring semester
(Breakdown: about \$70 more per month)*

Even with this adjustment, our rates remain well below the going rate in the region—in fact, the monthly increase is about the cost of *one* lesson at many other studios. We take no pleasure in raising rates, and this is truly our last resort after exhausting other options.

Please know that our commitment to accessibility has not changed. We will continue to offer:

- **Flexible payment plans** for families who cannot pay the full semester upfront
- **Limited financial assistance programs and sponsorships** for those facing hardship

We understand how difficult these times are, and we never take for granted the sacrifices families make so their children—and adults of all ages—can pursue music. Your trust, your encouragement, and your continued support mean more to us than words can express.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for believing in our mission and for being part of the Black Hills Studios of the Arts family. We remain dedicated to supporting your musical journey, and we look forward to another season of growth, creativity, and community.

With deep appreciation,

Mallory Dekker

Executive Director

Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

Dr. Gerrit Scheepers

President

Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

Tanya Harrod

Vice President

Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

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Treasurer

Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

Jennifer Nelson

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Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

Karen Kierstead

Board Member

Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

Carlie Herrick

Board Member

Black Hills Studios of the Arts: A Nonprofit Corporation

Christopher Bochmann

Board Member

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Debra Dodson

Board Member

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