

# Private Voice Lessons PISD

## Nicole Silva

Dear Parents and Students,

My name is Nicole Silva and I am so excited to be a returning teacher of vocal studies here in Frisco ISD! I am a graduate of the University of North Texas with degrees in vocal performance and music education. During my college years, I have performed roles and scenes in the UNT Opera, such as one of the Major General Stanley's daughters in *Pirates of Penzance*. Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*. I also competed in the Texoma Regional NATS Conference where I was selected as a fifth chair finalist. In 2013, I have made my first student debut in the *Festival Brasileiro* (hosted by the University of North Texas), in which I performed selections from Villa-Lobo's song cycle *Modinhas e canções*. During the course of my college career, I participated in Sankt Goar International Music Festival and Academy in Germany, where I had the opportunity to study with some of Europe's renowned singers, and also perform art songs in various languages and operatic repertoire. Recently, I was invited this summer to sing in Opern Festspiele Recital (small setting opera gala) in Frankfurt, Germany, where I performed works from *Die Fledermaus*, *Rigoletto*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. While in high school, I studied under the tutelage of Mr. Derrick Brookins at Plano Senior High School. During high school, I have sung in large choral works with the PSHS A Cappella choir, such as Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart's *Laudate Dominum* K. 339 and performed solos in Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*. I also was selected as a 1<sup>st</sup> Soprano 4<sup>th</sup> chair finalist in the All-State Choir, and was a member of the Plano Senior High School Honors Choir and Chamber Singers.

During the course of the school year, students will:

- 1) Develop good and healthy vocal technique through various vocal exercises
- 2) Be able to sing all styles of repertoire that reflects their current technical ability
- 3) Further develop their ability to interpret music based on applied musical concepts
- 4) Further develop their sight reading skills and learn new tips and effective approaches

In the training process, it is beneficial to have goals to work toward, so I highly encourage each of you to take advantage of performing opportunities inside and outside choir. I will follow along the choir schedule and prepare you for each upcoming event, such as All-State competitions, UIL solo and ensemble, solos or duets for choir concerts, etc.

I am excited about getting to know each of you and look forward to helping develop your vocal and musical skills!

Nicole Silva

**Nicole Silva**  
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## **Voice Studio Contract and Agreement**

### **Private Lessons:**

Lessons are 23 minutes in length and are taught once a week during the student's choir period. If make up lessons need to be arranged, students have the option to have their lessons before or after school.

### **Calendar:**

The studio follows the Prosper I.S.D school calendar.

### **Payment:**

Lessons are \$20 per session, which most months you will receive a minimum of 4 sessions totaling \$80 a month. There may be additional costs for sheet music, accompanists for auditions/competitions, etc. Acceptable payment methods are cash or check. Please make checks payable to "Nicole Silva". Payments must be made on (or before) the first lesson of the month.

**Overdue Payments:** late fee is \$20.00 per week; every week that payment is overdue. Instructors are told not to teach a lesson for which payment has not been received. Non-payment, returned checks, or repeated late payments (2 or more) may result in your student being dismissed from the voice studio. If you know you have a conflict with a future lesson, please discuss it with the instructor at the time of the payment and accommodations will be made.

### **Expectations:**

Students are expected to practice regularly and to prepare their assigned music material to the best of their ability. In order for students to make the most of each lesson, **students will need the following to EACH LESSON: 1) Folder & Agenda, 2) Pencil, 3) Music (with complementary CDs or mp3 files), 4) Commitment, 5) Communication.**

Remember that this is YOUR homework, and you will get out what you put in. The only way that you will improve is if you practice every day.

**Quality Practice:** Sometimes students should be singing through a piece from beginning to end, but to make a practice session more effective, students need to isolate problem spots and work on those first, then put all of the pieces of the music back together in the end. Students should practice with their complementary CD or mp3 file for 30-35 minutes a day, with a few breaks to avoid vocal fatigue. In other words, to achieve better results and a more consistent and faster progress, students should aim for shorter and more frequent practice sessions daily.

Be fully prepared for each lesson. As stated above, practice the material and exercises you have been assigned to work on. Bring a 3-ring binder with you to **each** lesson for handouts and sheet music.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Students must give at least 24 hours notice for all cancelled lessons in order to receive credit for future or make-up lessons. Failure to do so will result in a forfeited lesson, and students will be charged the regular lesson rate for each forfeited lesson. Teachers will not

be required to make up any forfeited lesson. In the case of an emergency or illness, notification must be made at the earliest possible time, and the teacher will make accommodations for a make-up lesson.

**Excused absences** will be made up or credited. These consist of, but are not limited to school sponsored trips, sickness (with proper notice), in-school testing, school change of schedule, or choir director's discretion.

**Unexcused absences** will NOT be made up or credited. These consist of, but not limited to forgetting a lesson or un-notified absences.

If a student is late for a lesson, the teacher is under no obligation to extend the lesson beyond the normal ending time or make up the lost time at a later date. If a teacher is late for a lesson, the teacher must either extend the ending time or make up the lost time at a later date. For any lesson the teacher misses, the teacher will give a make-up lesson.

### Lesson Termination:

The enrollment is meant for the entire year, which means that students are expected a year of commitment of voice study. If a student plans to discontinue lessons for reasons such as A) student moves to another school, B) student has some vocal health issue, or C) paying parent loses job, please give the instructor at least two-weeks of notice in advance.

Students may be dropped by the studio instructor (with choir director's approval) for excessive absences, non-payment, failure to make satisfactory progress, or disrespectful and disruptive behavior.

### Materials:

Students are required to bring their own **agenda**, so that students can use to write down their assigned warm ups, repertoire and music theory for the week. Students will need their own **3-ring binder**, in case sight-reading related handouts are given to the instructor. Most of the time, the instructor will recommend students to have their **own vocal anthology books (with complementary CDs)** where they can find and sing repertoire that would be appropriate for their current technical prowess, and supplementary materials (**music theory books, etc.**). In order for students to receive repertoire books and other supplementary materials recommended by the instructor, students will be required to either purchase music online or in music store, or pay the instructor for any music materials, which will then be picked up and delivered to the student. Students may also access some free sheet music that is currently in the public domain at [www.imslp.org](http://www.imslp.org). Students are also encouraged to discover and request to learn new music that interests them.

### Instrument Care:

Your voice is your instrument. Do your best to take good care of it and using it wisely. Get plenty of rest. Drink lots of water. Avoid smoke. Do not strain your voice by screaming or yelling excessively.

### The Role of the Parents:

- 1) **Pay** for lessons on time.
- 2) **Remind** your children to bring their materials to their lessons.
- 3) **Support and encourage** a consistent regular practice schedule.
- 4) **Monitor** your children's practice times on a consistent basis (Recommended practice time is 30-35 minutes a day). The outside-of-lesson practice makes each lesson a more valuable and enjoyable experience for both the student and the teacher.

- 5) **Communicate** with the teacher about any conflicts and/or changes in your children's practice habits.

#### **The Role of the Students:**

- 1) **Practice and Prepare** for each lesson by using practice guidelines and assigned materials.
- 2) **Follow** a regular practice routine that includes vocal warm-ups and exercises, sight reading, solo material, audition material, and choir music
- 3) **BE ON TIME.**
- 4) **Notify** your teacher AT LEAST 24 hours in advance if you have to miss a lesson.
- 5) **Come prepared** for all lessons with your **folder, music, necessary lesson CDs, and handouts/music theory materials.** Students who come to their lessons unprepared or fail to bring their music to their lessons will forfeit their lesson time and money for that lesson.
- 6) **Understand** what absences are considered "excused" and "unexcused" for lessons.
- 7) **Participate** in solo performance (Ex. UIL Solo and Ensemble, choir concerts) and/or TMEA All-State audition opportunities provided by your voice teacher and choir director.

#### **Performance Classes:**

In the studio, students are highly encouraged to sing in performance classes, which occur twice a semester and are casual performances run like a master class, where singers will get the opportunity to practice getting used to singing in front an audience (other studio members), and receive feedback on their presentation from the instructor and studio members. Performance classes are a very unique experience for singers in which they have the opportunity outside of their individual lessons to learn and find different approaches to making their overall singing presentation better, such as learning how to develop more character that is portrayed in the sung repertoire, learning helpful tips to overcome performance anxiety (nerves), and also trying other technical approaches to help further improve singing if necessary. More details about performance classes are listed below:

- 1) **Projected Dates:** TBA. Performance class sessions will be about 1hr in length, depending on how many singers will participate in each one of them.
- 2) **Times:** TBA
- 3) **Where:** TBA
- 4) **Cost:** Free. Singers will not be charged for performance class coachings.
- 5) **Attire:** Business Casual- Guys: khakis with a polo shirt or slacks with a button-down shirt with nice shoes (no flip flops or tennis shoes). Girls: simple nice dress, skirt or slacks with a blouse and comfortable dress shoes (no flip flops). Singers in the performance classes should look presentable, but at the same time keep it simple, which means they do not need to overdo it (ex. tuxedos, ties, prom-like gown, stylettos, etc.).
- 6) **Expectations:** Singers should show up to their performance classes fully prepared, which means their music should be close or totally ready to be performed (notes, rhythms are fully and well-learned, and singers should know what they are singing about). Singers are expected to prepare only one song to the performance class. Sheet music may be used for performance, but it is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that they sing their song memorized if they want to get more out of the performance classes. Parents are more than welcome to stay and watch the singers make music ☺

**Student Recitals:** Students will have an exciting opportunity to sing in two recitals during the school year: Holiday Recital and Spring (end-of-year) Recital. Details about the recitals are listed below:

**Holiday Recital:**

- 1) Projected Date: December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Date may be subject to change.
- 2) Time: TBA
- 3) Location: TBA
- 4) Recital Repertoire: Each singer is allowed to sing 1 or 2 song selections, which should be polished and memorized. Singers are free to sing any song style they wish; they may sing anything classical or holiday classics. Students are also more than welcome to set up a duet or a small ensemble for the recital.

**Spring (End-of- the Year) Recital:**

- 1) Projected Date: May 19, 2018. Date may be subject to change.
- 2) Time: TBA
- 3) Location: TBA
- 4) Recital Repertoire: Each singer is allowed to sing 1 or 2 song selections, which should be polished and memorized. Singers are free to sing any song style they wish; they may sing anything classical, pop, or Broadway. Students are also more than welcome to set up a duet or a small ensemble for the recital.

**I have read the above Voice Studio Policies and I understand my obligations and responsibilities as stated or implied.**

Student Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

My choir period begins at: \_\_\_\_\_

In case make up lessons are needed, I would like to take voice lessons  
(circle one):

Before School

After School

Keep pages 1-5 for your records, complete page 6 and return to the studio instructor ASAP.