



Ballard High School Celebrating All Things Ballard 2026

Music Lessons for All: Opening A World of Performance Opportunities

[Ballard Performing Arts](#) (BPA) strives to provide an inclusive and welcoming community for all BHS students. Over the past five years, one of the most powerful ways to support that mission has been through **Music Lessons for All** — a program that ensures every Band, Orchestra, or Choir student who wants private lessons can access them, regardless of financial circumstances.

Private lessons help young musicians build technical skills and deepen musical understanding. For many families, however, the cost is simply out of reach. When BPA originally surveyed students in 2021, two-thirds reported taking private lessons at some point in their high school music career — yet 17% said financial barriers “Somewhat” or “Very Much” prevented them from accessing lessons. The program was created to eliminate those barriers entirely.

At the [Ballard High School Foundation’s](#) 2021 Celebrating All Things Ballard auction fundraiser, donors contributed more than \$24,000 to launch this equity-driven initiative. The impact was immediate: students gained access to one-on-one coaching that strengthened their technique, confidence, and musicianship.

In 2025, BPA Directors approached the Foundation again, in hopes of raising more money for the program. “We had exhausted those funds, and we had students who were still very interested in taking lessons, but did not have the means to do so,” said Band Director Jay Gillespie.

The Foundation called out with a year-end direct appeal, and donors again rallied around this effort, raising \$10,000 — including a \$5,000 Foundation match — to keep lessons accessible for every student who needed them.



This year's special funded item at Celebrating All Things Ballard will once again support Music Lessons for All, ensuring that cost never stands between a student and the individualized coaching. *(The annual summer event is also an important fundraiser for Ballard High School extracurriculars: Athletics, Performing Arts, Cheer, and Dance.)*

Your Gift Makes an Immediate Difference

Please consider a gift for this summer's **Music Lessons for All** campaign. Every contribution — whether \$25 or \$2,500 — directly supports a student's growth, confidence, and access to high-quality instruction.

As you can see, your gift can go a long way:

- **\$50** → pays for **one private lesson**
- **\$1,000** → supports **one student** with twice-monthly lessons for the full school year
- **\$5,000** → supports **five students** with twice-monthly lessons for the school year

Private lessons are one of the most effective ways for young musicians to grow. Your generosity ensures that every Band, Orchestra, and Choir student — not just those who can afford it — has access to the same opportunities.

"I literally have had parents moved to tears when they find out we can help their students get lessons at no or reduced cost," Gillespie said. "The Foundation literally changes lives. Thank you!"

We have many options for giving to this important initiative:

- Make a direct donation to the campaign at bit.ly/BPALESSONS26.
- Donate through the Celebrating All Things Ballard Online Auction (August 1–16). Check out the many items up for bid in support of Ballard High School teams and programs! [Register and Donate](#)
- Join us to raise the paddle for "Music Lessons for All" at the Salmon Dinner & Live Auction on Thursday, August 13 at Pacific Fishermen Shipyard) | [Buy Tickets](#)

Thank you for supporting Music Lessons for All Ballard Performing Arts students!

Questions? Email Foundation Executive Director Dick Lee at rjlee@seattleschools.org.

