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Capacity in the school is limited to 171, but Lambeth said there are 25 people in the building at most during the busiest hours. About 66% of the school's teachers have been vaccinated, Lambeth said.

Zooming ahead with virtual lessons

Because of the greater risk of COVID-19 transmission from singing, Treichler moved her lessons online and stayed online until the safe studio was constructed.

"I had an opinion that it just wouldn't be as good as in-person, and of course, it's different, but it also made other things a lot more possible," she said. "... I chose to really look at the positives, and it made a huge difference in my life that I was able to keep my work going because it's my life's passion."

In some ways, virtual lessons helped forge a closer understanding between teacher and student.

"For the first time, I'm teaching students online, so I can see their practice situation at home; I get to see what their home life is like and ... what kind of support they have with their families," Saito-Beckman said. She relocated to her hometown of Bend from New York City at the start of the pandemic, and teaches students locally, as well as in New York City. "I get to be one of the few adults that they actually see on a weekly basis, so I make sure that I'm on when I show up for those lessons because they need a lot of pos-

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— **Miya Saito-Beckman, violin instructor**

itive adult interactions right now."

Instructors at Music Flow, which provides in-home lessons in Central Oregon, began preparing for virtual lessons weeks before the shutdown in mid-March. The school, founded and directed by guitarist Travis Palladino, also canceled its group classes at the Environmental Center.

After a few months, as restrictions loosened, Music Flow offered in-person lessons outdoors with masks and social distancing. When the weather grew colder, some students and teachers opted for indoor lessons, again with masks and social distancing. About half of Music Flow's students do in-person lessons, while half have stuck with virtual lessons, Palladino said.

"Prior to signing up a new student, we have a discussion based on COVID just to make sure everyone understands and is comfortable about how lessons are going to be conducted," Palladino said. "We do have a few instructors who teach all virtually and have been very successful with that."



Submitted photos

Music Flow founder and director Travis Palladino teaches an online guitar lesson during the pandemic.

Adapting to COVID-19

Teachers have had to adapt to music-specific challenges when teaching virtual lessons. Latency — the delay caused by digital sound traveling from the input microphone to the output speaker — makes it impossible for students and teachers to play music together while on a video lesson.

"When teaching new music, I would sing and play my students a line and then they echo back, and then while they're singing I would play along with them," Treichler said. "You can't do that online because the sound gets canceled out and it gets really wonky or we can't hear each other. So I started right out of the chute, 'This is such a great opportunity to train your ear. And so you're going to hear your part and then you're going to be able to listen internally and start to learn to really match pitch.'"

Recordings can help combat latency. Dickinson sends her songs to her instructor before lessons, and often the lessons are spent evaluating these recordings, she said.

Finding motivation to practice is another hurdle for students. Cascade School of Music offered a virtual spring talent show, CSM's Got Talent, and the school's video fundraiser filmed at the Tower Theatre in December. Music Flow helped students organize online Zoom recitals for family and friends to replace the regular in-person recitals at Cascades Theater in spring and fall.

In-person lessons at Cascade School of Music have brought new challenges with social distancing.

"For the beginner, when you're used to grabbing their hands and helping them with the fine motor control of bow holds, I have to rely a lot more on the parents to get involved," Saito-Beckman said. "It's really important for me to be very specific and clear with my word choice, because a lot of it is



Music Flow piano and violin teacher Amber Heath teaches a virtual music lesson during the pandemic.

trying to explain to a child how to do something instead of physically helping them."

McKenzie Harris, an 18-year-old senior at Summit High School, started taking guitar lessons with Palladino about five years ago, when she was in middle school. She has continued her lessons through the pandemic, starting with Zoom lessons for the first few months and then moving outdoors and finally, indoors.

"Even with all the changes and the struggles, it's still totally worth it to have music in your life," Harris said. "I think it's also shown that in so many different circumstances, you can still have the things you're passionate about."

Dickinson, who won second place in school's Got Talent with a performance of an original song, continues to take virtual lessons. She performed a couple of times on the virtual Storytellers Open Mic at The Commons during the pandemic.

"I think that in a way, the pandemic helped me find my music," Dickinson said, "and in a way, my music helped me get through the pandemic."

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