

On Thursday, October 13, 2016, Cathy Stewart led a wonderful Studio Teachers Meeting titled, “The Business of Running a Studio.” It was held at the John Kendall Recital Hall at Potter Violins’ new location in Takoma Park, MD. At least 20 teachers attended. Some of the audience members taught at their home studios, while others taught at either private or public schools.

Ms. Stewart, who has taught violin for over 30 years, started by going over the myriad costs of running a studio. She listed everything from professional dues, to studio maintenance, to liability insurance. She then explained her payment structure and included tips for the best ways to make payment simple and easy for parents. She recommended that teachers charge a deposit for students to reserve a space for the coming next year and a late fee for late payments.

She then transitioned to a discussion of studio policies. This portion included details about attendance, make-up lessons, and studio registration. Ms. Stewart also shared strategies for making private studios more lucrative. Holding group classes or hosting a workshop, for example, can be excellent learning opportunities for students and bring in more income for teachers. She ended with a question and answer session.

Ms. Stewart is an amazing resource of information about studio teaching and she imparted many gems of practical knowledge during her talk. She proved that studio teachers really can make a comfortable living with the right business skills and organization. This ASTA sponsored event is part of a series of Studio Teachers Meetings, events that bring together ASTA members interested in improving their private teaching. There are more such meetings scheduled for 2017.