

# AMBASSADOR

## American Suzuki Talent Education Center

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point  
College of Fine Arts and Communication

*Changing lives by providing the best in performance,  
creativity, and expression*

October 2004

### From the Director's Desk

By Dee Martz

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2004-2005 year. I hope that you look forward to reading the Ambassador as much as I do. I refer to the thought provoking and practical articles that are written by my colleagues on the ASTEC faculty on a regular basis. I am inspired to read or re-read the quoted books and articles and to think more deeply about the way the Suzuki philosophy can influence daily life. I talk about the practicing articles so frequently that my ASTEC students and those I work with at workshops and Institutes around the country get the advantage of learning from the great ideas shared by the entire ASTEC faculty. Because the Ambassador is also published on line, Suzuki teachers and parents from all over the country are regular readers of Suzuki news from central Wisconsin.

Occasionally the Ambassador also includes articles written by ASTEC students or parents. These articles have been about the influence of the Suzuki philosophy, special music related volunteer activities or even reflections on the now completed ASTEC years. The poems, short articles and long letters from parents and students add a dimension to the Ambassador that enhances us all. I am grateful to those who have taken the time to write these articles and submit them just in case others might be interested. The truth is that almost everything submitted has been published.

ASTEC faculty members find the parent and students input so special that we have decided to create a specific column to regularly include this kind of article. At the moment the column does not have a "name" so in addition to submitting articles we welcome suggestions. The person who submits the

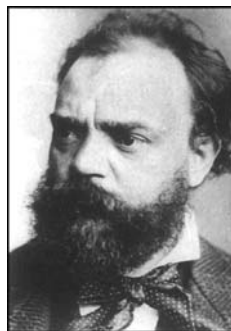
winning name will be recognized in the Ambassador the first time the column runs.

Each of you is invited to write about your ideas, your successes and your strategies with ASTEC families by writing for the Ambassador. I am eager to learn from you and to share your ideas with others.



### Dvorak to Host Music of the Masters

By Tim Zander



**Antonin Dvorak**, the popular Czech composer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, will be the host of this year's **Music of the Masters** dinner event. This is the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the elegant fundraiser, which is sponsored by the American Suzuki Foundation. The Foundation uses the proceeds from Music of the Masters to fund the needs-based scholarships awarded each year to ASTEC families, as well as other support for ASTEC and ASTEC music students.

The **Music of the Masters** of 2004 will feature elegant dining, including Chicken Florentine, and top notch entertainment provided by the students of ASTEC. There will be strolling violinists, chamber ensembles, and pianists for your dining pleasure, and a special musical program after dinner. You will also be invited to place your bids on the fabulous items in the Silent Auction.

We hope you can join us at the **Melvin Laird Room** at the **University Center**, UW-SP, on **October 23<sup>rd</sup>**, for cocktails and hors' d' oeuvres at **5:30**, and for dinner at **6:30**. Tickets are \$35.00, and can be purchased at the ASTEC office, the UW-SP Arts and Athletic Box Office, or from any Foundation board member. You can reserve a table for 6 or 8 with premier seating at a special price by calling Tim Zander at 424-2373.



### Violin Marathon Experiments with New Format

By Pat D'Ercole

In anticipation of the new space we will have available in the new building next fall, the violin faculty would like to experiment with a new format for marathons. Beginning with the October marathon, from 9:00 to 10:15, the focus of the repertoire will be on Pre-twinkle to Book 3. Pre-twinkle to Book 3 students should plan to stay until 10:45 to attend the mini concert and cookie break. From 10:45 to 12:00 the focus of the repertoire will be on Book 4 and above. Student at this level should arrive at 10:15 to hear the mini concert and have cookies. Just as the advanced cellists and violists go to their marathon after cookie break, violinists in CSCO can come immediately after rehearsal. Of course, that's not to say that book 4 and above students will not play any book 1 pieces between 10:45 and noon. Often we use book 1 pieces to teach more advanced skills, so some of the early book pieces will still be played. And it would be wonderful to have book 4 and above students come and join the younger students to be good role models and provide inspiration. (Besides, they might miss playing some of those "old standards"!)

So you are all still welcome to come and play for the entire morning, but if you must choose because of other family activities, this will help you to know when your child will get the most playing time.

While there are advantages and disadvantages to every format, this one will place a high priority on

attendance. We will have approximately 38 students in Books 1-3 and 50 in Book 4 and above. Without the advanced students we will not have that big, mature group sound, however, it will allow us as teachers to spend more time honing skills that are appropriate for that level and age group.

The violin faculty has decided to try this arrangement for the October, November and December marathons at which point we will re-evaluate and either continue this format or try another configuration. We welcome your observations over the next three months.



### The 70% Performance

By Ann Marie Novak

Musicians of all ages and levels of development spend a great deal of time engaged in the activity we call "practice". At different times, "practice" means different things. Often times it means that we are engaged in the process of learning certain skills or a certain piece; sometimes it means that we are adding new skills to a familiar review piece, sometimes it means that we are polishing a skill until it becomes a natural part of our playing, and sometimes it means that we are preparing both ourselves and a very polished piece for an upcoming performance. Even though practice can mean many different things, there is one fact that is inescapably true every time anyone practices: *practicing involves the setting of standards.*

It is rumored that the legendary pianist Artur Rubinstein once said that, for him, a satisfactory performance was one in which he recreated at least 70% of what he produced in his best practice. Now, I must issue a disclaimer here: I do not have a reputable source that directly connects this statement to Rubinstein. In fact, it seems more likely attributable to the equally legendary pianist, Vladimir Horowitz, who was quite open about his experiencing anxiety and nervousness throughout his remarkable performance career. Regardless of the source of this comment, it certainly was a hot

topic among piano students during the 1970s and 80s. For me, it has continued to be a thought-provoking statement throughout my years of performing and teaching.

For the purpose of this article, the source and the precision of delivery of this comment is not nearly as important as the content and the intent. The fact that one of the greatest pianists who has ever lived could be satisfied with a "70% performance" is, at the very least, *somewhat* surprising...or is it?

While I never heard this outstanding artist play live and in person, I certainly heard many of his recordings by the time I heard this supposed quote. It was a well-known fact that Rubinstein adored performing, yet at the same time, suffered from some degree of performance anxiety (and therefore one could attribute at least some of that 30% loss to the distractions and pressures of the performance setting), but even so, I still just couldn't believe that he was playing only 70% of the notes.

I was struggling with my own performance anxiety issues at that time, so I was quite sympathetic, but I had heard him play brilliantly, and so I had a very difficult time accepting his evaluation of his own playing. The recording/editing process was fairly archaic compared with what we have today. For one thing, editing at that time could be done only at the breaks that defined the sections of a piece; today, thanks to digital recording, we can edit on any one note. Besides that, it was quite customary to record live performances, even though this allowed for no editing whatsoever. All of that having been said, and considering the amazing quality of Rubinstein's recordings, how in the world could it be that we were hearing only 70% of his best effort?

Over the years, as my musicianship and pianistic skills grew, so did my understanding of the essence of Rubinstein's comment. My early conception that a "70% performance" meant that Rubinstein played only 70% of the *notes* was indicative of my youthful understanding of music. You see, when we are in the early stages of learning to play an instrument, all of our energy is focused on just playing the notes/making a sound. At that point, we are learning to manage so many different aspects of producing a tone, that we are unable to conceptualize anything beyond that. Our entire musical world, we might say, consists of playing the notes. It never occurs to a

student at that level of development that there is a whole world of music beyond the notes.

Only as we continue our growth in musicianship do we begin to truly appreciate the many aspects of music that make it a living, breathing thing ... something to be experienced, not just heard. Once I grew to a point where I understood that Rubinstein was talking about 70% of *all* of the aspects of music combined, including (but not limited to) the following: notes, dynamics, tempo, phrasing, rhythm and pulse, rubato, balance, voicing, pacing, tone, style, emotion, communication of intent and content and communication of emotion with the audience. Of course I realized that this changed the picture considerably, but, still, 70% wasn't a passing grade in any educational institution I'd ever attended. At this point, I became suspicious of the honesty of this great musician's claim. How in the world, I thought to myself, could anyone get past the critics and worm himself into the hearts of millions of concertgoers and musicians around the world, all with only a 70% average? I knew it wouldn't be a high enough GPA to get me into any colleges, yet there must be some validity to it; otherwise, why would this highly respected performer make such a bold claim?

It took a number of years of teaching before I began truly to see the wisdom of his words. When we teach, we hear ourselves saying some of the same things over and over again to different students in different ways. One of the things I do every fall semester with my slightly older students is to set goals for the year. Together, we cover aspects of learning and playing the instrument that the student would like to refine and/or improve throughout the upcoming academic year. Some of the items we look at are: technique, tone, practicing, styles, reading and performances. Because we fill out a "goal card" and refer to it at various times during the year, this is a very concrete way of looking at the notion of reaching a fairly specific level in a specific time frame. What is less apparent to the student is the "How am I going to achieve these goals?"

This is where the "70% performance" comes into play. If we take Rubinstein's comment at face value, then at some point, we have to ask ourselves, "70% of *what*?" I think it is fair to say that we can safely assume that we are talking about 70% of 100%. While this may seem unbearably rhetorical at this point, it is, in fact, this very question that is central to

finding success in playing an instrument. Each individual musician, professional or beginner, formulates a set of standards of quality along the way. He/she subjects every tone, breath, phrase, bow stroke, finger stroke to these standards.

One way we can look at the "70% performance" is to first ask, "What is my 100%?" If we were to look at what Rubinstein considered to be his 100%, we would find a level set higher than we could reach even on our best days. Because his 100% is so far above where the rest of us play, even 70% sounds utterly amazing.

So, how did Rubinstein get there? How can we get there? The answer is both simple and complex. First of all, we must remember that our own 100% is flexible: it can grow as we grow, and it can either be held up as a standard or it can be ignored. Secondly, we can, to a certain extent, choose where that 100% lies. Third, and most importantly, in order to have that 100% available to us at performance time, we **MUST** apply it to every practice point in every practice session.

For example, if you start your practice with a warm-up such as Twinkle, tonalization, scales and/or arpeggios, you must apply the same 100% standard to these "routine" tasks as you do to the Mozart Concerto you are preparing for that upcoming audition. This is the point where some of my students roll their eyes and say, "But they are only scales!" Ah, but this is what makes the difference in how well we play everything! Why?

1.) Those very scales, chords, tonalizations and arpeggios are some of the basic elements of which music is constructed (this is especially apparent in Classical period pieces). Since these elements are in their purest (simplest) form in a warm-up (not stylized or complicated by the piece), they are easier to play at that 100% level.

2.) Setting the highest 100% standard for absolutely everything we play contributes to our views of ourselves as musicians. If we think of ourselves as "100% players", then we play as 100% players.

3.) If we keep in mind that our 100% is flexible, then we can raise that 100% as we progress. One good example of this has to do with listening. I tell my students that, if there is one skill that plays an

integral role in advancing as a detailed and sophisticated player, it is listening. Why? Basically, if you can't *hear* the subtleties, you cannot *play* the subtleties. When you listen as a beginner, you listen for the basic elements: pitch (melody) and rhythm. Listening is a skill that, in the early stages of learning, enables you to recognize a piece (to discern Lightly Row from Go Tell Aunt Rhody). Later, you listen for more elements, such as dynamics and balance. Later still, you listen for finer details such as style elements, rubato and general flow of the music, precise length of release notes, and cross-rhythms. Thus, our 100% raises as we grow.

So, the next time you sit down to practice, think about what you want your 100% product to sound like, and then imagine what 70% of that will sound like. Even (especially) when you play your scales or tonalization, ask yourself, "Is this my 100%?" If it's not, then, "How can I make it better?"

One other important lesson can be learned from this thought process. It is unrealistic to expect to play better in a concert setting than in a practice setting. If you say to yourself, "Oh, I'll get it next time" or, "It's OK, I know how to do it" then you are setting yourself up for disappointment. It is true that, as musicians, we spend our lives in the endless pursuit of a perfection that does not exist. This may sound a bit frustrating or depressing to some of you; if so, it might be helpful to remember that "perfection" can be defined as our personal 100% as we declare it, and that 100% changes as we grow and change as musicians. In this way, we can maintain the pursuit, but alleviate the pressure that accompanies the traditional concept of perfection.



**Voila Viola**

By Dee Martz

In June I attended my very first International Viola Congress. About 350 violists gathered at the University of Minnesota for this much anticipated event. Because it was a new experience for me I promised myself that I would make the effort to meet

people every where I went. While I was checking into the hotel I met two other first-time attendees who had come all the way from Iceland. After a short conversation we discovered that we had studied with the same viola teacher in the mid 1960s! It is a small world.

The Conference was filled with extraordinary performers, pedagogues, luthiers, clinicians and retailers from around the globe who came to share their talents and expertise. One of the peak experiences I had while at the Conference was listening to Paul Neubauer (concert violist and former principle violist of the New York Philharmonic) play 39 different violas in less than two hours. The logistics and the results were quite interesting. As I walked into the Ted Mann Concert Hall I noticed that there were several tables filled with violas up on the stage. It turns out that the violas were separated into groups by price (under \$10,000, \$10-20,000, \$20-30,000 and above \$30,000.) Mr. Neubauer started at the under \$10,000 table where he picked up a viola, announced the number of the instrument, the name of the maker and the year that the instrument was made. He then played a short series of phrases design to highlight the sound of the instrument in all registers, its response and a variety of colors that could be produced. He played one instrument for 2-3 minutes and moved onto the next instrument and repeated exactly the same process. He used the same bow for the entire demonstration. It was fascinating to hear so many violas played one after the other. Although I knew that a higher price did not necessarily mean a better instrument I was still startled at the striking differences in quality of sound of instruments at similar price points. I was particularly impressed by one viola in the \$10-20,000 and then found myself sitting next to the maker at a concert just a couple of hours later.

It was a special experience to be surrounded by violists and to be at a Conference where all the strings vendors were only showing violas, viola shoulder pads, viola strings, viola music, viola CDs....Well, you get the picture. As I said this was my first experience at an International Viola Congress but I certainly hope that it will not be my last.



## Notes from the Endpin

By Lawrence Leviton

Welcome back to an exciting school year. As many of you know, we had several long standing members of the cello studio graduate this past spring. I'm excited to be starting three young pre-twinkle students to fill some of their slots in the cello studio. In addition, several other students have moved in from other studios. I hope you give them a warm welcome when you see them at Marathon.

To accommodate the new students the marathon schedule will work as follows:

Pre-Twinkle Students, 9-9:20

Books One through Four, 9:20 until Cookie Break

Books Five and Above and Cello Choir, 10:45-Noon

I also want to announce a special concert that we will be giving this December. For the first time, we will be having a combined ASTEC and University Cello Choir Concert. It will be taking place on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 in Michelsen Hall. This will be an exciting evening of music all performed by cello choir. I'll have more details as the event approaches.

Happy Fall!



## Violin for Sale

Johanness Kohr ¾ size violin with backpack case, chin rest and bow included. Used about two years. In great condition and has beautiful tone. \$500.00

Call 715-258-7556 or email [weavewap@handeltech.com](mailto:weavewap@handeltech.com)





## Student News

**Maddie DeBot** auditioned for the 4 year UW-Madison Scholarship this past June and was named first alternate. Should one of the scholarship winners decide to attend another university, Maddie will be able to attend UW-Madison tuition-free for four years no matter what she declares as her major as long as she plays in the university orchestra.

**Jonathan Cochrane** was Oliver in Waupaca Fine Art Festival Production of the musical *Oliver*. **Rado Wilke** also participated and played several roles.

**Jonathan Cochrane** was also was a 3<sup>rd</sup> runner up for the Suzuki Association Mini-Journal Cover Contest. His name and a reprint of his submission appeared in the Mini-Journal which is distributed to all participants at 68 institutes held throughout the US and Canada each summer. If you are interested in entering a cover design for the 2005 Mini-Journal Cover Design Contest, you must be between the ages of 4 and 14. Suzuki or music-related subject matter is preferred and the artwork may not be computer-generated. The deadline is Jan. 15, 2005. Send to: SAA Cover Design Contest, PO Box 17310, Boulder, CO 80308.

**Erik O'Reilly** performed his home Minuet Piano Recital on July 16, 2004.

**Joseph Banovetz** performed his home Minuet Recital in piano on July 25, 2004.

The following ASTEC students attended the 2004 American Suzuki Institute:

<b>Lydia Anderson</b> ♪	<b>Michael Josephson</b>
<b>Soren Anderson</b> ♪	<b>Ben Karbowski</b>
<b>John Banovetz</b>	<b>Emily Karbowski</b> ♪
<b>Sarah Bauer</b>	<b>Jonathan Karbowski</b>
<b>Kelsey Christensen</b>	<b>Ann Marie Kosmoski</b>
<b>Emily Clay</b>	<b>Jacob Kubisiak</b> ♪
<b>Jonathan Cochrane</b>	<b>Rachel Ley</b> ♪
<b>Michael Crump</b> ♪	<b>Bryce Marion</b>
<b>Naomi Crump</b>	<b>Jenika Marion</b>
<b>Madison DeBot</b>	<b>Luisa Marion</b>
<b>McLean DeBot</b>	<b>Zachary Markman</b> ♪
<b>Michael DeBot</b>	<b>Zara Markman</b> ♪
<b>Miranda DeBot</b>	<b>Margaret Medo</b>
<b>Wade Dittburner</b>	<b>Roy Meyer</b> ♪
<b>Wyatt Dittburner</b>	<b>Jane Mitchell</b>

<b>Christopher Droske</b>	<b>Will Mitchell</b>
<b>Alyssa Eiden</b>	<b>Lindsey Mocadlo</b>
<b>Craig Felt</b> ♪	<b>Peter Munch</b>
<b>Forrest Fleishauer</b>	<b>Peter O'Reilly</b>
<b>Morgann Glazer</b> ♪	<b>Quinn O'Reilly</b> ♪
<b>Nicholas Guzowski</b> ♪	<b>Allison Patchett</b> ♪
<b>Walker Guzowski</b> ♪	<b>Christopher Patchett</b> ♪
<b>Brad Hessler</b>	<b>Chris Peck</b>
<b>Navneeth Iyengar</b>	<b>Will Peck</b>
<b>Laura Josephson</b>	<b>Elisa Prebble</b>
<b>Lara Prebble</b>	<b>Petrea Schedgick</b>
<b>Andrew Rall</b> ♪	<b>Lauren Sheibley</b>
<b>Benjamin Rall</b> ♪	<b>Sam Sheibley</b> ♪
<b>Brynn Rathjen</b>	<b>Jason Smith</b>
<b>Rachel Reichert</b>	<b>Anthony Smyth</b>
<b>Kelley Rolak</b>	<b>Daniel Smyth</b> ♪
<b>Stacey Rolak</b>	<b>James Smyth</b> ♪
<b>Jessica Ryan</b> ♪	<b>Philip Smyth</b>
<b>Emma Sands</b> ♪	<b>Christa Spieth</b>
<b>Erik Sands</b>	<b>Nakisa Vaezzadeh</b>
<b>Gretchen Sands</b>	<b>Parisa Vaezzadeh</b>
<b>Jayson Schedgick</b>	<b>Rado Wilke</b>

♪ Indicates the student participated in a recital



## Faculty News

**Margery Aber** was the "Inspiration of the Month" for August on the website *Hill Connections*. To read the tribute, go to <http://hillconnections.org/ri/aber4jl.htm>.

**Pat D'Ercole** was a teacher trainer at the Intermountain Suzuki Institute in Sandy, Utah, the Chicago Suzuki Institute in Deerfield, IL and the American Suzuki Institute. She also performed in Utah and at ASI.

**Dee Martz** served as the Coordinator for Viola Sessions at the Suzuki Association of the Americas 11<sup>th</sup> Conference which was held in Minneapolis May 28-31. She also presented a session on Viola Ensembles. As an SAA Board member she had the privilege of presenting a "Learning Community Award" to the Suzuki Association of Peru. **Eunice Cordero de Paz**, a recent UWSP Suzuki Masters program graduate, helped translate the presentation

materials and after several hours of practice Mrs. Martz gave the speech in Spanish!

**Dee Martz** attended the International Viola Congress June 9-13 which was sponsored by the University of Minnesota School of Music.

**Mrs. Martz** served on the faculty of the Intermountain Suzuki Institute in June and the Chicago Suzuki Institute in July.

**Dee Martz** was thanked for her input in the Dedication in Martha Yasuda's recently published American Melodies, Double Stop Solos and Duets for Viola.

**Lawrence Leviton** will be performing on UWSP Professor Paul Doebler's flute recital on September 30<sup>th</sup> and will be performing on UWSP Professor Catalin Rotaru's bass recital on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

This summer **Lawrence Leviton** taught at the Intermountain Suzuki Institute in Utah, the ChiZiibii Institute in Bemidji, Minnesota and the American Suzuki Institute in Stevens Point.



#### May 2004 Graduates

Liana Schreiber, Piano Book 5  
Sam Sheibley, Piano Book 1  
Chris Peck, Cello Book 3  
John Banovetz, Viola Book 4  
Lauren Sheibley, Violin Book 3  
Nadia Qutaishat, Violin Book 2  
Cal Irons, Violin Twinkle  
Madison DeBot, Violin Twinkle  
Laura Josephson, Violin Book 3  
Brynn Johnson, Piano Book 5  
Kelley Rolak, Violin Book 8  
Elisa Prebble, Violin Book 2



#### September 2004 Graduates

Lindsey Mocadlo, Violin Book 4  
Hannah Buehler, Violin Book 5  
Zachary Markman, Piano Book 3  
Naomi Crump, Violin Book 2  
Daniel Smyth, Piano Book 3  
Keisuke Yamamoto, Violin Book 8  
Gretchen Sands, Violin Book 6  
Lucas Chan, Violin Book 4



#### Upcoming Events

**Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>,** ASTEC Orchestra will NOT meet today.

**Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>,** Marathon Saturday

**Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>,** Music of the Masters. Cocktails and hors' d' oeuvres at 5:30 pm. Dinner at 6:30 pm.

**Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup>,** Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, UC Alumni Room

**Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>,** Piano Halloween Recital, 11:00 am and 12:30 pm, Michelsen Hall

**Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>,** Marathon Saturday

**Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>,** Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, Michelsen Hall

**Thursday, November 25<sup>th</sup>,** ASTEC Orchestra will NOT meet today – Happy Thanksgiving!

**Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>,** Marathon Saturday

**Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>,** Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, UC Alumni Room



## The Parent's Pledge

Reprinted from the ASTEC Parent Handbook

A light-hearted look at some ideas Suzuki parents should take seriously.

1. I will play the Suzuki record every day, even though "Twinkle" starts coming out of my ears, and I find myself whistling "Lightly Row" at executive board meetings. My child will learn how to play the pieces only if he listens to them regularly, so I will gracefully suffer "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" for 1,947 times, if necessary.

2. I shall do my best to be alert and attentive at lessons, resisting the temptation to sew, read, or yawn. I realize how sensitive my child is to my attitude, and if he or she suspects that I am not 100% involved, his own attitude will be poor.

3. I will either leave siblings at home when we come to lessons, or be sure to provide quiet activities to do during the lesson times.

4. I will control the impulse to prompt my child during lessons, though I may have to literally bite my tongue. I know that my child cannot pay attention to two teachers at the same time, and that it is my turn when we're home.

5. Likewise, I will refrain from exclamations, groans, or facial expressions of dismay and embarrassment; they are distracting, and tend to destroy my child's

confidence. I will even hold back praise until after he is finished playing so that I do not interrupt his train of thought.

6. I will help my child mentally prepare for his lessons by talking about his pieces and what he will do at the lesson, and make every attempt to create a restful, calm, and unhurried atmosphere in the car so that my child arrives at the lesson in a receptive state.

7. I will try to be creative in practice sessions, making them as pleasant for both my child and myself as I can. I will try to approach practicing as a challenge to my ingenuity, and not as another chore that must be done.

8. I shall resist the temptation to compare my child with others. Each child learns only as he is ready to learn, and if I try to push him, we will both become frustrated. The times that he needs my belief in him the most are precisely those times when I begin to fear that he is about to reach (and pass) the world's record for Length of Time Spent Learning a Single Piece. Suzuki says every child can learn if given enough time and encouragement; I shall not give up prematurely.

9. The teacher and I will present a unified front, and we will freely share successes, problems, and solutions so that we actively understand and support each other.

