

Lauren Sutherland

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Teaching Statement

In my journey as a student of singing, I have witnessed first-hand the immense power and privilege that a voice teacher wields. Singing is so much more than a physical activity; the mental aspect of singing is paramount to healthy music-making. I am honored to be entrusted with my student's voices. There are 3 main tenets that guide my teaching philosophy: **opportunity, healthy vocal production, and empowerment.**

I believe in giving every student, regardless of background or singing experience, the **opportunity** to learn how to sing. This starts with being flexible with my format for lessons. I offer both in-person and virtual lessons, and I have had nothing but positive feedback from my work over Zoom/FaceTime. One of my student's parents said the virtual option made it "easy to fit lessons into my son's other activities." Tied into opportunity is my belief that *everyone can learn to sing* given the proper tools and with enough determination to practice the tools. I will meet a student where they are and cheer them on toward their goals. I am patient with my students as they strive to reach their vocal goals, and I understand that each student deserves a unique approach.

Healthy vocal production is paramount to creating sound that is both beautiful and comfortable to the singer. In my technical work with singers, I work to create resonance in the back of the mouth by lifting the soft palette, allowing the sound to blossom in a natural and free way. My breathing technique is centered around *appoggio*, which allows students to create powerful vocal sounds without straining in their throat.

My ultimate goal in teaching vocal technique is to **empower** my students by providing them with enough tools in their "singing toolbox" to be their own best teacher. My technique is grounded in physiological fact but works uniquely depending on each student. Rather than using a "one-size-fits-all" technique, I carefully listen to each student to determine what their needs are and focus on addressing their weaknesses and highlighting their strengths. I offer students the tools necessary to correct vocal faults and encourage them to use these tools to troubleshoot in practice sessions, and bring back their findings to their next lesson. This individualized approach ensures that singers find their own unique voice.

I am invested in my student's success and their well-being. More than just a voice teacher, I aim to become a trusted mentor for my students. A quote from a student's parent sums it up perfectly: "My daughter's time in voice lessons was so much more than just learning the right notes. Lauren became a mentor and a friend and someone she looked up to greatly."