Our Program Today

- Engages more than 2,000 students each year
- Provides high-caliber instruction from passionate and skilled faculty
- Operates in public and private schools and community centers throughout Chicago and Northwest Indiana
- Offers group instruction in strings, band, choir, piano, guitar, early childhood, and general music

Continuum of Instruction

In many cases, the Merit Music in Communities program serves as the first step for students in Merit’s comprehensive continuum of instruction. Motivated students are encouraged to continue their studies at Merit’s Joy Faith Knapp Music Center by enrolling in:

- Private Lessons
- Instrumental & Vocal Music
- The Alice S. Pfaelzer Tuition-free Conservatory (by audition only)

For Students Enrolled in Financial Aid...

Merit School of Music removes barriers to music education by providing financial support, including:

- Need-based tuition relief
- Low-cost instrument rentals
- Discounted music supplies

Merit Music in Communities is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

Merit School of Music is a member of the National Guild for Community Arts Education.

Meritfest

Each spring, nearly 1,200 2nd - 12th grade students from 30 schools in Chicago and Northwest Indiana perform on the stage of Chicago’s renowned Symphony Center for Merit School of Music’s 2-day annual event, Meritfest.

1200 Students | 45 Buses | 2 Days
**Merit Music in Communities** provides high-quality music education through group instruction in strings, band, choir, piano, guitar, early childhood, and general music. In addition to year-long courses, multi-week general music residencies are available where Merit teaching artists collaborate with students and classroom teachers to creatively enhance reading, language and critical thinking skills through music.

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## COURSES

### BAND
Grades 4 - 12
2 - 5 days per week | 45-60 minutes
Introduce young musicians to their choice of brass, woodwind, or percussion instruments. For more comprehensive programming, schools can also elect to offer sectional classes which focus on a specific instrument family.

### CHOIR
Grades 1 - 12
1 - 5 days per week | 45-60 minutes
Teach students to use their voice as an instrument in a larger ensemble.

### GENERAL MUSIC**
Grades K - 5
1 day per week | 40-60 minutes
Give students a foundation and head start in learning an instrument and appreciating music. Global percussion can be offered as an add-on program for grades 3-5.

### STRINGS†
Grades K - 12
2 - 3 days per week | 45-60 minutes
Introduce students to their choice of string instrument. Each class must be dedicated to either violin, viola, cello, or bass. Schools may add orchestra programming for students who have completed at least one year of strings.

### PIANO†
Grades K - 5
1 - 2 days per week | 45-60 minutes
Give students the opportunity to learn piano and gain a strong foundation in music theory and performance in a group environment. Fundamental skills are introduced to students in an engaging and collaborative setting.

### GUITAR†
Grades 4 - 12
2 - 3 days per week | 45-60 minutes
Offer guitar instruction to students and provide a foundation in performance and related theory. Guitar classes are most successful with small groups of between 6-10 students.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD
Grades Pre-K - 1
1 day per week | 45-60 minutes
Stimulate young minds with an introductory and engaging musical experience. An open classroom space with carpet provides an ideal setting for dancing, movement, and instrument play.

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## RESIDENCIES

### MUSIC AND STORYTELLING
Grade 3 | 8 weeks
Classroom teachers work with Merit teaching artists to select a story and topic to bring to life through music and performance. The curriculum is tailored around one of three stories:
- an Ashanti Tale (about cooperation, hardwork and laziness)
- a Nigerian folktale (an anti-bullying message)
- a West African Pourquoi Tale (about cause and effect relationships and taking responsibility)

### RECORDERS RULE!
Grades 3 and 4 | 16 or 32 weeks
Students learn the foundations of music performance and music theory through the recorder. Curriculum consists of singing games, dancing and songs from American cultures and world music.

### SONGWRITING
Grades 3 and/or 4 | 8 weeks
Together students create album covers, write an artist biography and learn to create music. Students will learn effective strategies for problem solving and creating songs in a cooperative environment.

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## SAMPLE PROGRAM COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
<th>HOURS/ WEEK/ DAY</th>
<th>RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAND/ORCHESTRA</strong></td>
<td>30 weeks 4 days a week 60 minutes a class</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHOR</strong></td>
<td>33 weeks 3 days a week 60 minute classes Full Accompanist</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL MUSIC</strong></td>
<td>30 weeks K through 4th grade 2 classes per grade 1 day a week 60 minute classes</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BAND/ORCHESTRA</strong></td>
<td>30 weeks 3 days a week 55 minutes a class</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHOR</strong></td>
<td>33 weeks 2 days a week 55 minute classes Half accompanist</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL MUSIC</strong></td>
<td>30 weeks 2nd through 4th grade 2 classes per grade 1 day a week 55 minute classes</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BAND/ORCHESTRA</strong></td>
<td>30 weeks 2 days a week 45 minutes a class</td>
<td>$6,200</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHOR</strong></td>
<td>30 weeks 1 day a week 120 minute classes Partial Accompanist</td>
<td>$6,500</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL MUSIC</strong></td>
<td>12 weeks 3rd grade only 1 class per grade 1 day a week 55 minute classes</td>
<td>$1,100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The prices listed above reflect general program costs and should not be used as a proper quote for your school/site. A quote for your school/site will be provided upon request.

†Prices do not include the rent, lease, or borrowing of instruments.

*Choir accompanists can be present at any number of rehearsals and performances. The accompanist breakdown in the examples above are as follows:
- Full: accompanists are present at all rehearsals and performances
- Half: accompanists are present at half of the rehearsals and all performances
- Partial: accompanists are present at dress rehearsals and performances only

**General Music classes have “informances” rather than performances. During informances, parents are invited into the classroom to learn about their child’s class and the musical skills and knowledge they are acquiring through music.

†These programs require that instruments are available to students. Merit will assist site administrators with rental, leasing, or borrowing of instruments.
Chicago’s Merit School of Music is a nationally accredited music school helping young people transform their lives by removing barriers to high-quality music education. Our 125 passionate and experienced teaching artists engage nearly 5,000 students annually through sustained introductory, preparatory, and conservatory level music instruction – including classical and jazz, and featuring band, chorus, and orchestra, as well as guitar and piano. Merit’s comprehensive array of course offerings is distinguished by two signature programs, beginning with our community-based program, Merit Music In Communities, and building toward the intensive, audition-based Alice S. Pfaelzer Tuition-free Conservatory. Thanks to the support of Merit’s dedicated faculty, staff, board, donors and parents, 70 percent of our students receive financial assistance. This enables motivated students, regardless of economic circumstance, to develop their talent and to use Merit as a springboard for achieving their full musical and personal potential.

MERIT’S CURRICULUM

Merit’s scope and sequence of learning objectives is designed to enrich a student’s education. Merit educators develop musical potential and they stimulate students’ personal and educational growth. Specifically, students can achieve the following strengths and skills:

PERSONAL AND EDUCATIONAL GROWTH

• Strong work ethic
• Effective listening
• Instrumental technique
• Musical skills
• Discipline
• Teamwork and collaboration
• Musical knowledge
• Self-confidence

GENERAL INFORMATION

• Programs are available during, before or after school.
• Total instructional cost includes all music and supplies.
• Instrument rental or purchase packages are also available.

FOR MORE INFO

Please contact Merit at:
312.267.4466
or
abischoff@meritmusic.org
to discuss any of these packages. To complete an application, visit the School & Community Programs section on Merit’s website, www.meritmusic.org.