



Chicago, Illinois

**Part-time Position Announcement:**

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**Choir Director and Voice Department Chair**

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**Description**

Merit School of Music seeks a highly qualified candidate for the position of Choir Director and Voice Department Chair, beginning in September. The successful candidate will teach 9-11 hours of choir instruction at two to three Merit Music in Communities sites and at Merit's Joy Faith Knapp Music Center. Merit Music in Communities programs takes place at Chicago Public Schools, community sites, and neighboring school districts. An accompanist will be provided at all sites.

**Organization Overview**

Merit School of Music is a community music school located in Chicago's West Loop. Our primary goals are to help young people transform their lives and experience personal growth through music by providing access to sustained participation. For more than 40 years, we have been home to a diverse community of talented young musicians and have acted as a springboard for achieving full musical and personal potential. Our 125 passionate and experienced teaching artists provide access to high-quality music education, engaging over 3,000 students annually at our downtown location and in area schools and community centers.

Our students, who reflect the socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of Chicago, have the rare opportunity to learn together, dream together, teach each other, and broaden their horizons as they build inspiring lives through music. Merit develops musicians and provides young people with the tools they need to excel in life, with virtually 100 percent of our graduates going on to conservatory or college.

Merit School of Music is committed to building a world in which historically underrepresented groups can attain access to quality music education. Simultaneously, Merit is continually working towards becoming an organization that is truly reflective of the demographics of the city and the students we serve. Merit is dedicated to being an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and anti-racist organization and continually examining our efforts in this area.

**Reporting Relationship**

The **Choir Director** and **Voice Department Chair** report to the **Piano, Voice, and Guitar Program Director**.

**Job Responsibilities**

Responsibilities of the **Choir Director** include, but are not limited to:

- Deliver music instruction commensurate with Merit's curricula, teaching philosophy, mission, and values
- Teach weekly choir rehearsals to students in 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Prepare students for performances two to three times per year
- Follow Merit's benchmarks for large ensemble instruction
- Support students' growth through Merit's continuum of programming
- Participate in regular parent engagement activities
- Complete student attendance during each class and rehearsal
- Attend Merit faculty meetings and departmental meetings
- Other projects as assigned

Responsibilities of the **Voice Department Chair** include, but are not limited to:

- **Faculty Leadership Team – approx. 35%**
  - Regular attendance at department chair meetings and faculty meetings
  - Assist with curriculum development and provide input regarding program evaluation
  - Assist in hiring process for new faculty within their department
  - Provide input regarding faculty assignments & teacher placements when requested
  - Collaborate with Program staff and other stakeholders to guide overall scope and direction of division
- **Mentorship & Professional Development – approx. 25%**
  - Provide mentorship to new faculty regarding Merit's Teaching Philosophy, curriculum, and organizational culture/values
  - Work with Program Director to facilitate professional development opportunities for faculty
- **Faculty Observations – approx. 25%**
  - Conduct regular observations of Merit's departmental faculty, in accordance with Merit's observation policies & procedures
    - Following an observation, conduct a follow-up meeting with faculty to provide evaluation feedback
- **General Program Administration – approx. 15%**
  - Convene a minimum of two department meetings each academic year
  - Communicate concerns from faculty to Merit administration, when needed
  - Other duties as assigned

### **Personal Skills/Attributes/Qualifications**

The ideal candidate would possess the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated success teaching beginning and intermediate choir to similar age groups (3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Strong classroom management skills
- A high level of personal musicianship
- Experience working with students of diverse backgrounds
- Ability to collaborate, communicate effectively and work well with faculty, colleagues, and administrators
- Uphold Merit's professional code of conduct: punctual, polite, responsive, collegial, and collaborative
- Strong organizational and administrative skills
- The ability to reliably travel via car or public transportation to onsite and offsite locations within greater Chicago
- Demonstrable commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Antiracism work

### **Educational Requirements**

Bachelor's degree in music or equivalent experience

### **Schedule**

- This position is estimated to cover **9-11 hours per week** at a variety of teaching locations, including at Merit's Joy Faith Knapp Music Center in the West Loop.
- Joy Faith Knapp Music Center Schedule:
  - Wednesday, September 28 – Wednesday, May 10
  - Children's Choir: 5:30-6:30pm
  - Mixed Choir: 6:30-7:30pm
- Classes at Merit's Merit Music in Communities sites may meet before school (7:00am – 8:00am), during the school day (9:00 – 3:00pm), or after school (3pm – 5pm). Individual site schedules will depend on the needs of the partner site and will be communicated in advance.
- Department chair duties require 5-10 hours per month depending on the level of activity

*\*Please note instruction is scheduled to take place in-person at Merit's Joy Faith Knapp Music Center or at one of Merit's partner community sites – this position requires candidates to live in the Chicago area.*

## COVID-19 Precautions

Merit School of Music requires all employees to provide proof of vaccination and booster shot against COVID-19. Please plan accordingly. Merit invested heavily in its HVAC system to improve ventilation throughout the building. Face masks are recommended to everyone who enters the Joy Faith Knapp Music Center. During offsite events, Merit employees must follow the precautions taken by the host institution. This is an in-person role.

## Compensation and Application

- Hourly base rates are calculated using a proprietary method that considers years of experience, recruitment/retention skills, studio size, education, and established success as a teacher
  - Base rates range from \$40 to \$80 per hour for private lessons with an additional \$2.00 per hour added to the base rate for group classes
  - Large ensembles pay 1.5x the group class rate
  - Off-site faculty are reimbursed for mileage as calculated from Merit's main campus
  - Full-time faculty (780 annual teaching hours) qualify for insurance benefits. 401K eligibility begins at 500 annual teaching hours.
- Department Chairs will be compensated with an annual stipend paid out in 12 equal installments (September 2022- August 2023). The stipend amount is determined by department size: number of faculty, students, weekly classes, etc., and total number of scheduled faculty observations for the year.

To apply, please upload your resume detailing your relevant experience and qualifications for this role [using this link](#). Applications will be accepted through August 12<sup>th</sup>. Materials should be compatible with Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF. Applicants will not receive confirmation of receipt of their materials. Further guidance and updates about the hiring process will arrive by e-mail, with interviews provided for finalists.

ALAANA/BIPOC people, trans, and gender-nonconforming people, and women are encouraged to apply.

For more information about Merit School of Music, please visit [www.meritmusic.org](http://www.meritmusic.org).

**Merit School of Music is committed to enhancing the diversity of our musical community, recognizing that by providing a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment for our students, we are preparing them for personal and professional success in an increasingly multicultural and global society. The Merit community recognizes that it has a responsibility for creating and sustaining a learning and working environment where difference is valued, and where equity and inclusion are practiced.**