



Part-time Position Announcement:

Early Childhood & General Music Instructor

Description

Merit School of Music seeks a dynamic Early Childhood & General Music Instructor to teach students from newborn through age 7 in its Early Childhood & General Music program. Teaching takes place at the Joy Faith Knapp Music Center in Chicago's West Loop and at partner sites across the city.

The ideal candidate will be available to teach on weekend mornings and weekday afternoons. Spanish proficiency is strongly preferred. Qualified candidates may also be considered for expanded teaching opportunities throughout the school year.

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 over 40 years, we have been home to a diverse community of talented young musicians, serving as a springboard for achieving their 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 where historically underrepresented groups can access quality music education. Simultaneously, Merit is continually working towards becoming an organization that truly reflects the demographics of the city and the students we serve. Merit is committed to being an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and anti-racist organization, continually examining our efforts in this area.

Reporting Relationship

The **Early Childhood & General Music Instructor** reports to the **Early Childhood/ General Music Program Manager** and **Program Director**.

Job Responsibilities

Responsibilities of **Early Childhood & General Music Instructor** include, but are not limited to:

- Deliver engaging, high-quality instruction to Early Childhood and General Music classes
- Develop lesson plans aligned with Merit's curriculum and pedagogical approach
- Participate in faculty and department meetings as requested
- Communicate with Merit staff, students, and families in a timely and professional manner
- Represent Merit's Early Childhood & General Music programs at recruitment events and performances
- Contribute to additional projects as needed (e.g., creating content for social media))

Skills and Qualifications

Must-have characteristics:

- Demonstrated success teaching Early Childhood and General Music classes
- Ability to lead student learning while actively engaging caregivers and parents
- Strong classroom management and the ability to foster positive rapport with students and families
- Track record of retaining students across sessions
- High level of personal musicianship
- Excellent collaboration and communication skills; able to work effectively with colleagues, administrators, and other stakeholders
- Professionalism in all settings—punctual, collegial, responsive, and reliable
- Flexible and adaptive disposition
- Demonstrated commitment to dignity in all interactions
- Ability to serve as an ambassador for Merit, including guiding families toward continued music study
- Reliable access to transportation to reach off-site and main branch locations

Preferred, but not required:

- Spanish language proficiency
- Ability to play and teach the ukulele
- Ability to play and teach the recorder

Educational Requirements

Bachelor's degree in music or equivalent experience/training

Schedule

Classes take place at the Joy Faith Knapp Music Center (38 S. Peoria St., Chicago) as well as at partner sites throughout the Chicagoland area. While next year's schedule is still being finalized, candidates should expect to actively teach approximately **6-8 hours per week** and be available to occasionally substitute as needed.

Typical teaching windows include (subject to change and not limited to):

- Tuesdays: 12:30 PM – 6:30 PM
- Wednesdays: 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM
- Thursdays: 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM
- Fridays: 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM
- Saturdays: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- Sundays: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Merit will work collaboratively with the selected candidate to create a final teaching schedule that is mutually beneficial.

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 \$50 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 after one year of employment.

To apply, please upload your resume detailing your relevant experience and qualifications for this role [using this link](#). Applications will be accepted through August 17, 2025. Materials should be compatible with Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of their materials through Airtable and further guidance and updates about the hiring process 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.

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.