



Saxophone Instructor

Part-Time Position Announcement

Chicago, Illinois

DESCRIPTION

Merit School of Music seeks a Saxophone Instructor to teach group technique classes in the Alice S. Pfaelzer Tuition-Free Conservatory (TFC), provide individual lessons through our Merit Music in Communities program at Rachel Carson Elementary School, and build and maintain a private lesson studio on-site at Merit's Joy Faith Knapp Music Center in Chicago's West Loop.

The Conservatory provides advanced musical training to Chicagoland's most promising and dedicated young musicians, serving students from intermediate to highly advanced in grades 6 through 12 as they build toward collegiate and conservatory-level study. In this role, the instructor will lead three group technique classes on Saturday mornings throughout the TFC year, helping students develop tone, technique, and the musical foundation they need to grow as saxophonists. The instructor may also have the opportunity to coach a saxophone chamber ensemble.

Through the Communities program, the instructor will work with 12 to 18 saxophone students in the band program at Rachel Carson Elementary School, serving 4th- to 8th-graders across a range of skill levels. Each student receives a 30-minute individual lesson during the school day each week.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Merit School of Music is a nationally accredited community music school headquartered in Chicago's West Loop, with additional branches in Chicago's Old Town and South Shore neighborhoods. Merit's 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 45 years, Merit has been home to a diverse community of talented young musicians and has served as a springboard for them to achieve their full musical and personal potential. Our 125+ passionate and experienced teaching artists provide access to high-quality music education, engaging between 2,500 and 3,000 students annually through programming at three branches and in 25+ schools and community centers across the Chicago region.

Merit students, who reflect Chicago's socioeconomic and ethnic diversity, 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 equips young people with the tools they need to excel in life; virtually 100 percent of Merit graduates attend conservatories or colleges, with 50 percent studying music at the postsecondary level.

Merit School of Music is committed to building a world where historically underrepresented groups can attain access to quality music education. Simultaneously, Merit endeavors to be an organization that genuinely reflects Chicago's richly diverse community. Merit is dedicated to being an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and anti-racist organization and continually examining our efforts in this area.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIP

The Saxophone Instructor reports to the Band Program Director.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Responsibilities of the Saxophone Instructor include, but are not limited to:

Teaching and Instruction - 85%

- Deliver high-quality instruction to students in group technique classes, individual lessons, and ensemble settings, commensurate with Merit's curricula, teaching philosophy, mission, and values.
- Communicate with Merit's Rachel Carson Elementary School band director to determine individual student needs and goals.
- Communicate with on-site Merit Band Program faculty to coordinate instruction and support student development.
- Host studio recitals for private lesson students at Merit's West Loop location.
- Provide Merit staff with student recommendations for additional Merit programming.

Administrative Duties - 15%

- Complete student attendance records for each class and lesson.
- Correspond with Merit staff, band directors, and students/families in a timely fashion.
- Work with Program and Student Services staff to manage on-site studio scheduling.
- Recruit students to the private lesson studio and to Merit classes and programs.
- Attend Merit faculty meetings and/or department meetings as scheduled.
- Other projects as assigned.

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Must-Have Characteristics

- Bachelor's degree in music or equivalent experience and training.
- Proven success teaching saxophone students at varying skill levels, from beginner through advanced, with a strong command of both classical and jazz saxophone technique, tone development, and repertoire.
- Strong classroom management skills, with the ability to keep group classes engaging and focused.
- Ability to collaborate and work well with colleagues, school faculty, and administrators.
- A high level of personal musicianship.



- Punctual, professional, and communicative, with a flexible and adaptive disposition.
- Reliable access to transportation, with the ability to commute to off-site teaching locations.
- A genuine commitment to Merit's mission and to dignity-centered communication with students, families, and colleagues.

Preferred, But Not Required

- Experience teaching in a school-based or community music program setting.
- Bilingual or multilingual; Spanish is especially valuable in this role, as many of our Rachel Carson families communicate primarily in Spanish.

SCHEDULE

- The Saxophone Instructor will teach three 45-minute group technique classes on **Saturdays from September 12, 2026, through April 3, 2027**, with classes running from **8:45 to 11:15 am**. All group classes are taught in person at Merit's West Loop location, the Joy Faith Knapp Music Center, at **38 S. Peoria St., Chicago, IL 60607**.
- The instructor may also coach a saxophone chamber ensemble, with rehearsal times scheduled based on student and instructor availability.
- Private lessons at Rachel Carson Elementary School (**5516 S. Maplewood Ave., Chicago, IL 60629**) occur on school days, with scheduling based on instructor availability. Lessons may be distributed across more than one day, depending on studio size.
- On-site private lessons at Merit's Joy Faith Knapp Music Center are scheduled based on instructor and student availability, any day **Monday through Saturday**, subject to building hours and room availability.

TECHNOLOGY IN HIRING

At Merit School of Music, we believe in a human-centered recruitment process. While our team occasionally leverages generative AI tools to assist with administrative tasks, such as formatting job descriptions or summarizing interview notes, we do not use algorithms, automated screening software, or AI platforms to evaluate, rank, or screen applicants. Every application and hiring decision is reviewed and made entirely by human hands and minds.

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.
- Faculty who work in the Merit Music in Communities Program (in schools and community centers) are reimbursed for mileage as calculated from Merit's main campus.
- Full-time faculty (780 annual teaching hours) qualify for insurance benefits. 401 (k) eligibility begins after 500 annual teaching hours and one year of employment.
- Personal days and sick days are earned and used in compliance with the Chicago Sick and Safe Leave Ordinance.

To apply, please upload your resume detailing your relevant experience and qualifications for this role [using this link](#). **Applications will be accepted through July 12, 2026.** Materials should be compatible with Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of their materials via email, and interviews will be offered to finalists.

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

For more information about the 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 its responsibility to create and sustain a learning and working environment where difference is valued and equity and inclusion are practiced.