



Violin Instructor - Group Classes

Part-Time Position Announcement

Chicago, Illinois

DESCRIPTION

Merit School of Music seeks a part-time Violin Instructor to teach group classes through our Merit Music in Communities (MMIC) program at James Ward Elementary School (2701 S. Shields Avenue in Chicago) and at our Comunidad de Alegre program in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago.

Through the MMIC program, the instructor will work in one or both of the following teaching settings: At James Ward, the instructor will teach 2 groups of 4-10 violin students in an after-school program. At Comunidad de Alegre, a community-based program that draws from several surrounding elementary schools and serves over 75 students in grades 3 - 8, the instructor will teach 3 groups of 4 - 10 violin students during after-school hours. In both programs, students receive group instruction once per week after school, with opportunities to progress through Merit's full continuum of instruction after advancing at their neighborhood site. Merit may offer additional teaching opportunities in the future.

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 grow 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, experienced teaching artists provide access to high-quality music education, engaging 2,500 to 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 choosing to study 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. At the same time, Merit strives 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 Violin Instructor reports to the Strings and Orchestras Program Director.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

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

Teaching and Instruction - 85%

- Deliver high-quality instruction to students in a group class setting, commensurate with Merit's curricula, teaching philosophy, mission, and values.
- Communicate with on-site Merit Strings and Orchestras Program faculty to coordinate instruction, support student development, and determine individual student needs and goals.
- Provide Merit staff with assessments and student recommendations for additional Merit programming.
- Support students in progressing through Merit's continuum of instruction.

Administrative Duties - 15%

- Complete student attendance records.
- Correspond with Merit staff, school administration, and students/families in a timely fashion.
- 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 elementary through middle school violin students at varying skill levels, from beginner through advanced.
- Strong classroom management skills.
- A high level of personal musicianship.
- Ability to collaborate and work well with colleagues, school faculty, and administrators.
- Punctual, professional, and communicative, with a flexible and adaptive disposition.
- Be an ambassador for Merit School of Music by representing the organization professionally in all settings and by counseling families and students to pursue their musical studies at the deepest levels.
- 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 working with staff and administration to support programming.



- Bilingual or multilingual; Spanish and Mandarin are especially valuable in this role, as many of our Ward and Comunidad families speak Spanish or Mandarin.

SCHEDULE

- Group classes at James Ward Elementary School take place on Wednesday afternoons from 3:00 – 5:00.
- Group classes at Comunidad de Alegre are slated to take place on Tuesday afternoons from 4:00 – 7:00, with schedule confirmation still pending.

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 humans.

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. 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](#). **We will accept applications through Wednesday, September 30, 2026.** Materials should be compatible with Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of their materials via email, with interviews provided 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.