



**The People's Music School**  
**STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK**  
2018-2019



**The People's Music School**  
931 W Eastwood Ave  
Chicago, IL 60640  
Phone 773.784.7032  
Fax 773.784.7134  
[www.peoplesmusicsschool.org](http://www.peoplesmusicsschool.org)

## **Staff**

Jennifer Kim Matsuzawa—President and Artistic Director  
Dave Avery — Program Coordinator, Uptown Academy  
Natalie Butler — Dean of Learning and Teaching  
Renee Davis — Director of Development  
Josh deVries — Program Manager, Uptown Academy  
Melanie Gold — Development Associate  
Alli Henry – Chief Operating Officer  
Abbey Larner—Finance Manager  
Krystal Miranda — Program Coordinator, BOTY & Greater South Side  
David Sands —Program Manager, SLAM  
Ewa Sarota-Raczek — Program Manager, Albany Park  
Bri Dorgan — Marketing Coordinator  
Ana Soto —Program Coordinator, Albany Park  
Carolyn Sybesma — Director of Artistic Planning and Partnerships  
Lilly Torres — Associate Director, Student, Family, & Alumni Engagement

## **Board of Directors**

Andy Bankert,  
President  
Mark Affolter  
Michael Buck  
Jamie Cleghorn  
Erin Delaney

Noam Frankel  
Marlo Gaal  
Jennifer Keller  
Jason Klein  
Jonathan Kletzel  
Sonya Miller

Tracy Sefl  
Penne Silverman  
Peter Sheren  
Rita Simó, Founder

## **Senior Advisors**

Tom Bracy

Adrian Holovaty

Tyronne Stoudemire

## ABOUT THE PEOPLE'S MUSIC SCHOOL

---

### Our Vision

The People's Music School (TPMS) envisions a society where all children have access to the unique social, emotional, intellectual benefits achieved through musical excellence. We believe music is transformative and empowers the lives of youth, families and communities.

### Our Mission

Our mission is to deliver access to the benefits of high-quality, tuition-free music education. Through intensive instruction and performance, our students achieve excellence in music that transfers to other areas in life. They grow musically, socially, emotionally and intellectually, and develop a foundation of responsibility, self-esteem, resilience and purpose.

### Our Values

**We provide opportunity:** Access to the benefits of music, regardless of socio-economic status or previous training

**We cultivate excellence:** High musical achievements reflected in all areas of life

**We work hard:** Focus, discipline and resilience required in everything we do

**We nurture creativity:** Innovative problem-solving sparks critical thinking

**We embody community:** Resourceful, diverse, welcoming community fully invested in common purpose

### History

TPMS is the only completely tuition-free music school in Chicago and the oldest in the United States. Our founder, Dr. Rita Simó, believed that all children should have access to music education, regardless of their family's socioeconomic status. With just \$625, a donated piano, and a few students, she started The People's Music School in 1976. From these small beginnings we've grown to serve over 660 students through individualized and group instruction at our Uptown Academy, Community Youth Orchestras, and Band Programs throughout the Chicagoland metropolitan area.

### Programs

**Albany Park (AP):** Our Youth Orchestras provide free orchestral music instruction in Albany Park at Hibbard Elementary School. The program, originally founded in 2008, is inspired by the El Sistema philosophy from Venezuela, which emphasizes intensive ensemble instruction. While the students' focus is on musical learning, the goals of the program are social and intellectual—as the students learn to play an instrument with their peers in an orchestra, they also learn valuable life skills such as discipline, focus, and persistence.

**Back-of-the-Yards (BOTY):** We provide free orchestral music instruction in the Back of the Yards neighborhood at Lara Academy. Starting in the spring of 2016, the Back of the Yards program is modeled after our Youth Orchestras of Albany Park site and inspired by the El Sistema philosophy from Venezuela, which emphasizes intensive ensemble instruction. While the students' focus is on musical learning, the goals of the program are social and intellectual—as the students learn to play an instrument with their peers in an orchestra, they also learn valuable life skills such as discipline, focus, and persistence.

**Service Learning Mentorship and Leadership (SLAM):** SLAM is a program for our most advanced high school students. SLAM includes chamber music instruction, private lessons, mentorship workshops, and college readiness counseling. In SLAM students receive **SERVICE**

hours through performances and volunteer opportunities, **LEADERSHIP** skills through the unique challenges of playing chamber music, and **MENTORSHIP** opportunities as they work with staff, faculty, and guest mentors through weekly workshops and college counseling. Through SLAM we work to connect with students musically, academically, and personally to help prepare them for their future.

**Greater South Side (GSS):** Starting in the winter of 2015/2016, the Greater South Side program provides free concert band instruction on the south side of the city at the Gary Comer Youth Center. While the students' focus is on musical learning, the goals of the program are social and intellectual. As the students learn to play an instrument with their peers in a band, they also learn valuable life skills such as discipline, focus, and persistence.

**Uptown Academy (UA):** For over 40 years TPMS has had a physical presence in Uptown with over 20 years in our current Uptown Academy building. Students in this program receive lessons and participate in an ensemble with theory and technology integrated throughout the curriculum. The UA is a unique musical community where students strive for musical excellence, make new friends, and learn to love music.

## Our Culture

What do we want our students to know about The People's Music School? Below are 10 questions we believe every student should be able to answer about our school:

### Questions all students should be able to answer

1 Who founded The People's Music School?	2 When was The People's Music School founded?	3 Name our 5 values?	4 How many locations does The People's Music School have? What are they called?	5 How much does it cost per student, per year to provide musical education?
6 Why do our parents have to volunteer?	7 Why do we need donations?	8 Why do the donors help us?	9 How does learning music help students in other ways?	10 What should I do to help the school?

### Answers

1 Rita Simo	2 1976	3 Excellence Creativity Community Hard work Opportunity	4 <b>4 main locations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Albany Park</li><li>• Back of the Yards</li><li>• Greater South Side</li><li>• Uptown Academy/ SLAM</li></ul>	5 It costs \$3,000 per student, per year.
6 Because they help us save money so we can teach more kids!	7 Donations help us make sure that we have enough money to pay for all of our students' music classes.	8 Our donors believe in YOU! They believe studying music will help you excel in life.	9 Excellence in music = excellence in life	10 Be an ambassador for the school, show our values, and help fundraise

## **PROGRAM DETAILS**

---

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

In exchange for this extraordinary, free education, students and families of the UA have certain requirements to fulfill. Each student/family is expected to meet all of the requirements listed in this handbook. Please take the time to carefully read all requirements, policies, and rules listed in this handbook.

### **FAMILY REQUIREMENTS**

#### **1. Service Hours**

Families must provide 8 service hours per semester for each child enrolled in the program. We know that our families have many different talents to share and we depend on these gifts to help us keep the program up and running. Service hour opportunities range from administrative tasks to ushering at concerts to professional services to donating food and supplies. We match our families' time, skills, and energy to the various jobs we need completed. Please remember that it is up to the family/student to actively sign up and successfully complete service hours. **Failure to complete service hours by the last day of each semester may result in student termination from the program.**

#### **2. Observation of Rehearsals and Classes**

Families are encouraged to observe classes and rehearsals and to continually check in with teachers. Please note that families are encouraged to check in with the student's instrument lesson teacher on week 6 and the final lesson of every semester.

#### **3. Fundraising**

It costs over \$2,500 per year to provide one student with free musical instruction. To help cover the costs of this valuable education your child will receive, we hold two events each year in which students and families are required to participate:

*Annual Prize Drawing:* A Prize Drawing is held during the fall semester. Student and families are asked to sell as many Prize Drawing Tickets as possible in order to raise funds for the program, and prizes are awarded to the holders of the winning tickets. The top fundraiser(s) will be recognized and receive a prize.

*Performapaloozathon:* Performapaloozathon is an end of the year concert and fundraising event. Each student will be given a pledge envelope and should collect as many donations as possible in support of their performance. The top fundraiser(s) will be recognized and receive a prize.

### **STUDENT REQUIREMENTS**

We believe that our students are phenomenal musicians who have the ability to successfully meet all program requirements. Students who work hard and meet requirements (in addition to the all family requirements) can remain students at UA until they graduate from high school! In order to maintain this privilege, each student must commit to the following each semester:

#### **1. Demonstrate development in his/her musical studies**

Students must demonstrate age/ability appropriate development in their musical studies at UA. Student development is measured according to the following:

- End of semester theory exams (70% required to pass)
- Written evaluation by the instructor after every lesson, group class, and ensemble
- Jury results evaluated by Program Staff, faculty members, and special professional guest musicians

Any student who fails to meet the minimum standards for any of the measurements above will be subject to dismissal from the program.

#### **2. Learn Music theory**

In music theory students will learn how to read and write, music, and it an essential subject for our students. Our music theory curriculum will be integrated into our lessons/ensemble classes and technology will be used to enhance student learning. All students must pass end of semester theory assessments with a score of 70% or higher to be considered in good standing.

### **3. Adhere to the Instrument and Material Loan Policy**

Students borrow instruments and materials (sheet music, folders, method books, etc.) from the program at no cost to families. **Students and families are required to sign an instrument loan contract before the student can receive an instrument.** It is very important that students treat their instruments and materials responsibly and with respect. Please keep these instrument care tips in mind to avoid damage:

- When you are not playing your instrument, keep it in the case with all latches and zippers closed.
- Never leave your instrument unattended on a chair or on the floor—if you are leaving the room, be sure that your instrument is securely in its case.
- Never swing your instrument or run or point with your instrument.
- Always bring your instrument inside when taking it home. Never leave it unattended in a car.
- Do not mark on the instrument in any way.
- Never leave your instrument in a place where there might be extreme hot or cold temperatures.
- Always pick up the instrument in its proper place—wind and brass players, by the body (never the keys, mouthpiece, or valves).
- Clean your instrument regularly as instructed by your teachers—wind players, use your swab to remove any moisture from inside the instrument.
- Inform your instrument teacher or Program Staff immediately if you notice any damage to the instrument or the case.

It is normal for instruments to require maintenance and minor repairs over time, which will be covered by the program. **However, loss or damage that occurs as a result of negligence by the student will require that the family pay for the repair or replacement fee, and the student may be subject to dismissal from the program.**

### **4. Attend weekly group or private instrument lessons**

All students study an instrument in a group/private lesson. New students will start in a Music Exploration class, which will help them identify the instrument that is the best fit for them to study. New students will then be enrolled in a 1-hour, small group lesson class. If a new student has a significant background in instrument study, he/she may audition for faculty and be considered for immediate private lesson study. Please see Program Staff for more information regarding this policy.

### **5. Attend weekly ensemble classes**

Ensemble experience is an important, fun and social part of any music education. All students enrolled at the UA who take private lessons must be enrolled in an ensemble. Students who take group lessons may be nominated to join an ensemble by the faculty member who directs it based on to their specific instrument and level of study.

\*See the High School Program Information section for more information on our ensemble policy as it relates to high school students.

### **6. Participate in juries**

At the end of each semester, all students will participate in a jury review and perform on the instrument being studied in group/private lessons. Students will perform assigned musical selections, technical exercises, and sight-reading example based on their ability level. They will perform before a panel comprised of faculty members, staff, and guest adjudicators from the Chicago musical community.

Juries help us assess our students' musical development on the instrument they have chosen to study. Through the jury process teachers will identify those students with exceptional performances. These

outstanding performers will then be nominated to receive private instruction, and a panel made up of faculty members and staff will make a decision based on the student's overall performance.

The results of the juries are shared with students and families during the final lesson of the semester and are kept on file to track student progress.

### **7. Participate in student performances and recitals**

Performances are a wonderful educational opportunity and offer students a chance to share what they have learned throughout the year. Every semester we provide numerous opportunities for our students to perform, and we expect students to participate in these events. At the end of each semester, a performance featuring UA ensembles is given. All students of the school must participate in these performances. Please be sure to continuously check the UA Calendar for specific details regarding the times and locations of performances.

For all school performances, students should follow the guidelines below:

- Our black TPMS T-shirt
- Black pants or skirt (knee length or longer)
- Black shoes, sock/tights

Please note that students who miss performances will be subject to dismissal from the program.

### **8. Adhere to attendance policy**

Each semester, students are allowed a maximum of three days absent per enrolled class (i.e. ensemble and lessons). Instructors are required to take attendance ten minutes into each class, and **any student not present within the first ten minutes will be considered absent**. In addition to regular class attendance, students are required to be present, punctual and prepared for their scheduled performances. On rare occasions, extenuating circumstances may prevent a student from fulfilling his or her attendance requirements. These occasions will be evaluated by Program Staff on a case by case basis.

PLEASE NOTE: If a teacher has to cancel your child's lesson, he/she is required to reschedule those lessons to make up the time with students. However, if a student is absent from a lesson for any reason, faculty **will not** reschedule the lesson.

Our attendance policy will be strictly enforced, and students who exceed the allowed number of absences may be placed on probation or removed from UA enrollment.

### COMMUNITY CODE OF CONDUCT

Since its founding on February 22, 1976 by Dr. Rita Simó, TPMS has been a place where everyone is welcome. We speak the universal language of music. We believe that the diversity of cultures, languages, appearance, beliefs, abilities, and lifestyles of our community members is what makes us so strong and special. All TPMS programs are safe spaces where students, families, teachers, staff, and guests can learn, have fun, take safe risks, make friends, and be themselves while making beautiful music.

Because our open and inclusive culture is so important to us, we hold all community members to a high standard of behavior. TPMS students and families will treat themselves, other students/families, teachers, staff, and guests with politeness, kindness, acceptance, and respect. This includes the language (in person, writing, or on social media) and actions of all community members. Community members who do not meet this community expectation will be asked to meet with Program Staff and may be placed on probation or removed from the program.

## **HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

We love our high school students and want them to remain enrolled at the UA! We understand how busy and demanding a high school schedule can be, and we want to provide ways to support our high school aged students' academic endeavors. We now have created special opportunities just for students in grades 9 – 12:

### **Service, Leadership, and Mentorship (SLAM) Program**

SLAM is a program uniquely designed to offer guidance and training for our most advanced high school musicians and help them succeed in high school and beyond. Students must apply and have the recommendation of their current instrumental lesson instructor and Program Staff in order to participate. Participation in SLAM fulfills all weekly Uptown Academy requirements (i.e. , lesson, and ensemble).

Through SLAM, our high school students will receive:

- Student driven small ensemble placements
- Ample performance opportunities
- Service learning hours (eligible for high school service learning hours requirements)
- Weekly private lessons
- Leadership workshops
- A community mentor to assist with high school/college related questions and opportunities
- Recommendation letters for summer music programs and college
- The potential to receive a college scholarship

### **High School Student Ensemble Exception**

High school aged students who participate in a performance ensemble (e.g. orchestra, band, and/or choir) at their academic school are eligible to opt out of the normal UA performance ensemble requirement. In order to opt out a high school student must:

- At the beginning of the semester show the Program Staff a copy of his/her current class schedule with ensemble listed and printed out on official school letterhead
- Remain in that performance ensemble for the duration of the UA semester
- Show Program Staff his/her report card each time grades are released
- Receive a grade of C (70%) or higher from their school's ensemble instructor

Students who opt out of an ensemble, yet do not meet all of these requirements at the end of the UA semester will be automatically re-enrolled in a UA ensemble.