



Student and Family Handbook - *Virtual*
2020-21

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About Play on Philly

Mission

Play On Philly provides underserved children in Philadelphia a transformative music education experience that develops and inspires the behaviors and personal skills needed for a successful life.

Vision

A Philadelphia where children and youth aspire to achieve success, realize their potential for growth, and are instruments of change in our city.

Values

Equity and Inclusion

Passion and Excellence

Commitment and Accountability

Community

History

Play On Philly (POP) was originally inspired by Venezuela's hugely successful El Sistema program that believes in equal access to music education as a social preparedness tool. Since its 1975 founding, El Sistema has served over one million youth in free orchestra programs across the country, proving that music education has a positive impact on academic and social skills, regardless of income level. Deeply inspired by El Sistema, Curtis Institute of Music graduate Stanford Thompson brought

this unique and proven approach to underserved youth in Philadelphia in 2011 to help encourage successful students, citizens, and musicians.

Thompson founded POP with two guiding principles:

- regardless of economic circumstance, every student deserves access to music education
- music education is a powerful tool to change lives and uplift communities

POP Programs

Virtual Divisions serve to ensure students continue their music literacy and musicianship skills with or without an instrument. A student's division placement is determined by their grade, proficiency and instrument:

Division 1: Pre-Instrumental is comprised of students from grades K-7 who have never learned an instrument before and are new to formal music instruction. These students will focus on pre-instrumental musical literacy and theory skills through projects tailored to their age group.

Division 2: Early Instrumental is comprised of students from grades 1st-4th who have limited instrumental experience and maturity. Their lessons will focus on music literacy, aural skills and solfege.

Division 3: Instrumental is comprised of students from 5th-12th who have at least three years of instrumental experience. These

students will focus partly on instrumental technique and partly on composition and theory.

POP Emerging Artist Collective – PEAC (Grades 2 – 12)

The PEAC program supports those students who have shown talent and have expressed a serious interest in pursuing music in their educational and occupational future. POP offers additional resources such as free private lessons, audition preparation and instrument upgrades (when needed) to provide the rigorous training and whole-family support needed to reach the highest levels of musical excellence.

Chamber Groups are mini-ensembles that work intensively on a piece of music independently and as a group. Student who are recommended to participate in a chamber group have demonstrated commitment to their instrument and can practice independently. Student receive weekly coaching and bi-weekly group classes.

Programming Staff

Program Coordinator

Each POP Division is managed by a Program Coordinator who oversees and implements all aspects of enrollment, virtual classroom assignments, the citizenship program, and Zoom and Edmodo management. Any questions you have about the daily operations of your child's music classes should be directed to the Program Coordinator.

Teaching Artist (TA)

The Play On Philly Teaching Artists (TAs) are highly trained musicians on their instruments who are deeply committed to the idea that intensive music education can be a vehicle for building life skills. Many of our TAs have studied at the nation's top music schools and bring high expectations and standards to the POP students. Each Teaching Artist

engages in many hours of training throughout the year to ensure they are teaching to the highest POP standard.

The Virtual POP Experience

Week in the Life - Each subdivision meets three times per week (all times are Eastern Standard Time):

Division 1: Pre-Instrumental

K-2: M/W/F - 3:30-4:15pm

3-4: M/W/F - 3:30-4:15pm

5-7: M/W/F - 4:45-5:45pm

Division 2: Early Instrumental

1-2: M/W/F - 3:30-4:15pm

3-4: M/W/F - 3:30-4:15pm

Division 3: Instrumental

Strings 5-7: T/Th/F - 4:45-5:45pm

Winds, Brass and Percussion 4-7: T/Th/F - 4:45-5:45pm

Strings 8-12: T/Th/F - 3:30-4:30pm

Winds, Brass and Percussion 8-12: T/Th/F - 3:30-4:30pm

Evaluation Work

Play On Philly evaluates our students growth and progress in a variety of ways. In collaboration with WolfBrown arts consultants, we analyze the deidentified information we have gathered from surveys and skills evaluations to further hone what we offer to our students. Evaluation work ensures POP continues to improve its practice both to benefit our community and to support the efforts of other organizations who aim to provide high quality and accessible music education.

Technology and Platforms

All students will need access to a computer or tablet and internet connection. If this is a barrier to accessing POP program, please be in touch with the Program Manager.

Zoom Policies – all virtual classes will take place in Zoom meetings. To provide an engaging and community-oriented learning environment, it is essential for students to activate their cameras during class. If this may be a barrier for your child to participate, please contact us.

To maintain the security of our classes, we will use a universal password to enter the zoom room. This will be emailed to families before classes begin. The password should not be shared with anyone.

Usernames - students are required to change their username in Zoom to display their full name (first and last) so we may check them against the class roster.

Edmodo - Play On Philly uses the online learning platform, Edmodo, as the primary method of communication with students. Through Edmodo, students and families can view and turn in assignments, respond to polls, and contribute to conversations. Students enrolled in POP virtual programs will receive an invitation to join an Edmodo classroom upon registration.

Concerts and Events

Each virtual session will culminate in a concert or showcase with contributions from all POP students. Students contributions may vary based on their class's project. **These concerts and showcases are mandatory for ALL STUDENTS.** Throughout the year, students may participate in several other performance opportunities which may include:

Community Performance are chances for smaller groups of POP students to play music and engage the community that they live in. Past performances have included trips to senior centers, SEPTA Music and Moves, Fairmount Park and day-care centers. POP is looking forward to continuing the work in our communities in a virtual way.

Cultivation Events are performance opportunities with Play On Philly's partners, supporters and donors. We find that POP students are their own best advocates and can express why POP is so meaningful to them.

Additional Opportunities may arise throughout the year for students to participate in more select ensembles. In the past, POP students have won auditions to participate in the Take A Stand

Festival in Los Angeles, or to go to instrument specific music camps and seminars.

Policies and Procedures

Program Attire

Even though students may tune in to class from their homes, it is expected that students dress appropriately to work with their teachers and peers.

Concert and Recording Attire

POP students wear a uniform for performance and recording. Concert dress code is:

- Boys: black shoes, black socks, black pants, white dress shirt
- Girls: black shoes, black socks, black pants, black skirt past the knee, white plain dress shirt or blouse

All POP instrumental students may receive a POP t-shirt which may be worn for specific concert and recording events.

NOT PERMITTED: T-shirts, jeans, denim skirts or jackets, sneakers, leggings, clothing with prints or designs, clothing with words or logos, skirts or dresses that stop above the knee, tank tops/sleeveless shirts/dresses.

Students wearing clothes other than those outlined for performances or recordings will be asked to change or they cannot participate.

Concert Attire Donations and Loans

Many of our young musicians can only wear their concert clothes once or twice before they outgrow them. While we cannot accept concert attire donations during the pandemic, we would be pleased to accept gently worn clothes once we return in person.

Daily Attendance

POP students are required to attend virtual program all three days each week. POP will communicate with advanced notice when program is not in session.

If a student must miss program, families should provide advanced notice to site staff by 2pm on the day of the absence. We understand that absences due to illness, family emergencies and doctor's appointments may arise. An absence is excused if it meets one of the following criteria:

- There is a family or medical emergency.
- A student has a doctor/dentist appointment (with a note).
- A student has a mandatory school function.
- A POP student has received pre-approved by the POP Program Manager to participate in an external music organization activity
- The student has an excused absence from school.

Doctor's notes must come from the Doctor's office directly.

If a student's absence does not fit one of these criteria, it is considered unexcused. Students are allotted 10 unexcused absences per year. Students who exceed their maximum number of absences will no longer be allowed to participate in the program that year.

Instrument Loans

Students participating in virtual programming in the pre-instrumental and instrumental divisions do **not** require an instrument to participate.

Instruments are loaned to students as needed. Any damage to the instrument must be reported to their teacher immediately.

Parent/guardians will supervise care of the instrument at home and will be held financially responsible for damage due to clear negligence or misconduct by the POP student.

Students must abide by these rules:

- The POP student is the only person allowed to play their assigned instrument.
- The instrument must remain secured in the case and in a safe place when not being played. Instruments should not, for example, be stored in cars/trunks beyond travel time or in places with extreme temperatures. These conditions may damage the instrument.
- All damage must be reported to POP staff immediately along with any information that can help assess the nature of the damages.

Family Communication

Email Newsletters

To ensure that families are well-informed, we send out periodic email newsletters to our primary contacts. These newsletters share information about upcoming events, no-program days and any schedule changes. POP newsletters also share exciting news and updates!

Other Communication

POP frequently uses text, email and phone calls to remind families about no-POP days, behavior issues and special event reminders. Most emails will come from our Program Manager, Michael Pechter, but occasionally Program Coordinators will reach out with division or project-specific updates.

Edmodo

Students will be expected to create an Edmodo account, if they do not already have one from previous POP virtual programming. The Edmodo platform will be used to post student assignments, quizzes, and other class-specific communications. Students should check the platform daily and we ask that parents/guardians monitor their student's use.

Citizenship Program

The citizenship program is the Play On Philly standards and code of conduct to which students and families are held. Part of being an effective member of the POP community is holding our students to the highest standards of integrity and citizenship. POPs virtual classroom expectations should be upheld in the same manner.

General Guidelines

- Students are expected to dress appropriately for a virtual class environment.
- Unless being used for class engagement, cell phone communication is strictly prohibited during POP time.
- Students are expected to follow all rules, as laid out by the Teaching Artist, in the virtual classroom and during in-person interactions
- Students are expected to keep themselves on mute when the Teaching Artist is giving instructions.
- Students are expected to activate their camera during class unless a parent/guardian has informed POP that this may be a barrier to participation.
- All uses of chat functions and message boards should be kept to topics relevant to the class.

Zero-Tolerance

The following behaviors have **zero-tolerance** at Play On Philly and will result in immediate suspension or expulsion:

- Threatening violence, verbally or in written form
- Inappropriate Language
- Sexual Harassment
- Instrument damage due to neglect
- Bullying

Citizenship Recognition

POP celebrates students who adhere to the POP code of conduct and who demonstrate preparedness, collaboration with others and helpful initiative.

During virtual programming, POP will continue to uplift the work and excellence of our students during Community Fridays.

Citizenship Infractions

Sometimes, students may struggle to meet POP's citizenship standards. In the case of minor issues such as repeated disruptive behavior in the classroom or failure to follow directions after three warnings, the first step will be the completion of a "reflection sheet". To complete a reflection sheet the program staff member tasked with monitoring the class will bring the student into a break-out room for one on one conversation. The reflection sheet aids POP students, families and staff in understanding and agreeing on what was problematic and what can be corrected for the future. In most circumstances, students are given opportunities to correct their behaviors.

If the situation requires, a student may be placed in the Zoom waiting room or removed from the Zoom room completely.

First Infraction:

1. Reflection Sheet is issued.
2. Program Coordinator will call parents/guardians.
3. Reflection sheet is signed and returned through Edmodo before the following POP class.

Second Infraction:

1. Reflection Sheet is issued.
2. Program Coordinator will call parents/guardians to request a meeting.
3. Reflection sheet is signed and returned through Edmodo before the following POP class.
4. Student and family meet with Program Coordinator before the student can return to program.

Third Infraction:

1. Reflection Sheet is issued.
2. Program Coordinator will call parents/guardians to request a meeting.
3. Reflection sheet is signed and returned through Edmodo before the following POP class.
4. Student is placed on a two-day suspension.
5. Student and family meet with Program Coordinator to write a citizenship contract before the student can return to program.

Fourth and Final Infraction:

If a student breaks their citizenship contract for a fourth time, they will earn a fourth reflection sheet and will be suspended for the duration of the session. It is up to the Program Manager's discretion if the student should return to the program in the following session. The Program Coordinator will communicate their decision at least two weeks in advance of the start of the session.

The POP Student and Family Commitment

POP holds itself, its students and its families to high expectations because we know that, together, we can achieve big goals. Below is a list of expectations to ensure that students and families receive the maximum benefits of the Play On Philly program:

Students will...

- **Come prepared to learn** with necessary materials which may include sheet music, instrument, pencil and necessary instrument-specific supplies for program each day. A POP student comes to

program with a can-do attitude and is ready to be the best musician they can be.

- **Practice** and review materials at home
- **Attend all mandatory concerts** to celebrate the hard work and achievement of each musician.
- **Follow POP's guidelines for concert dress** so that ensembles (live and pre-recorded) look clean and professional and the music can shine above all else.
- **Adhere to all POP Citizenship guidelines** to create a safe and nurturing music environment.
- **Care for their instrument and supplies.**

Families will...

- **Encourage practice at home** and ensure that students are caring for their POP-loaned instrument correctly.
- **Take responsibility for any damage or negligence to a POP-loaned instrument** due to their students misconduct.
- **Ensure students are properly prepared for concerts** with their instrument, sheet music and proper uniform.
- Encourage their student(s) to **follow POP citizenship expectations** and accept any consequences for negative actions.
- **Submit participation fees** by the assigned deadlines or according to the outlined payment plan.

Participation Fees

At POP, we believe that intensive, high quality music education should be afforded to all students, no matter their circumstance. The scholarship that POP provides to each student includes virtual and in-person instruction (when safe to do so), six-weeks of full-day summer camp, instrument loan, repair and supplies, access to orchestral training, and additional

opportunities to enhance your child's education. POP makes a long-term investment in its students and families because we know that music changes lives. For a child in Philadelphia to access these experiences cost upwards of \$13,000.

During these unusual times, POP recognizes the unique challenges families may face. We have reduced the 2020-21 participation fee because of these circumstances. To register, families are required to pay a non-refundable participation fee of \$25 per session. The first payment is due upon registration. Before each new 10-week session, families will be asked to pay the next session's fee when confirming their student's participation.

Participation fees can be paid by check, money order, or credit card -- **NO CASH**

Your **child is not enrolled in POP** if we have not received all registration forms and payment towards the participation fee.