



**Student and Family Handbook – In Person
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

POP Preparatory (Grades K-8)

Designed to provide general music and ensemble exploration for students each week so students can experience the positive benefits of music education.

POP Music Centers (Grades K – 8)

Offers each student 10 hours of group instruction each week throughout the school year. Students are loaned, at no cost, one of fourteen standard orchestral instruments and receive approximately 450 hours of musical training and performance opportunities throughout the year.

POP Symphony Orchestra (Grades 7 – 12)

An advanced ensemble of middle and high school students who have successfully auditioned to join our elite flagship orchestra, which features a challenging repertoire and requires an increased level of commitment.

POP Summer Camp (Grades K-12)

An opportunity for students from around Philadelphia, including those who participate in POP programming during the year, to engage in full day music and arts programming. Over six weeks, students participate in ensemble, studio classes and arts exploration. High School students develop leadership skills as Junior Teaching Artists.

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.

Music Center Staff

Site Coordinator

Each POP Music Center is managed by a Site Coordinator who oversees all aspects of program management, from classroom assignments, to payment processing, from the citizenship program, to permission slips. Any questions you have about the daily operations of your child's Music Center should be directed to the Site 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 POP Experience

Day in the Life

At Music Centers, POP students learn instruments through group instruction and ensemble work. The year is broken into three sessions, each one culminating in an evaluation (also called a musical jury) and a performance. The jury and performance celebrate a student's progress and helps POP teachers and staff ensure programmatic goals are being

met. Each jury is accompanied by a citizenship report detailing a student's work as a member of the larger POP community.

During a typical week at Play On Philly, students will split their time between instrument specific classes, also called studio classes, and ensemble rehearsals. In studio class, students learn the intricacies of playing their instruments. They learn to read music notation, master incrementally challenging techniques, and focus on learning core musical concepts. In ensemble, students practice playing as a larger unit to prepare for the many concerts which occur throughout the year. Students learn collaboration, compromise and persistence as they play as a community and strive toward the larger goal of creating beautiful music.

Before POP each afternoon, all students receive a snack and a moment to take a break after the school day. See your site-specific schedule for details about classes and dismissal procedures.

In POPSO, students spend most of their time working in ensembles. These students have gained enough skills in their instruments that they can focus on challenging repertoire (music selection).

Play On Philly 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.

Concerts and Events

Throughout the year, POP students commit to performing at three main concerts in December, March and May. **These concerts are mandatory for ALL STUDENTS.** Many students 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.

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.

Instrument Family Festivals are a chance for POP to celebrate a specific family of the orchestra. Across multiple Music Centers, POP students engage in several days of music making culminating in a day with a professional Guest Artist.

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.

Concert Transportation

POP uses a combination of public transportation, school bus, private vehicles and family carpools to get students to their performances and field trips. POP permission slips will indicate which type of transportation will be used for a specific event.

Policies and Procedures

Program Attire

During program time, students will adhere to the dress code and uniform of your site. Students are not permitted to wear sweatshirts, hoodies or jackets during program time. Please read on for guidelines concerning concert dress.

Concert Attire

POP students wear a uniform for performance. 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

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 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. Once or twice a year, POP Music Centers will ask for concert clothing donations. These clothing items are available to parents throughout the year by contacting your Site Coordinator. If a student shows up on concert day inappropriately dressed, the POP staff will make every effort to use the donated clothes to ensure your student can perform.

Snacks

Students receive snack free of charge each day before program begins. Students are welcome to pack additional food and beverage for snack time. Please be advised, POP is a peanut-free program.

Illness

If a student falls ill during program, POP staff will call all point of contact in a student's file until a parent/guardian is reached. In the unlikely occurrence that a child requires medical assistance, the staff will call 911 and emergency contacts. A POP staff member will accompany the child while they receive medical services until such time that a parent/guardian can arrive.

Medication

For those students who can self-administer necessary medications, we require that you provide information concerning medication type, any dosage recommendations, and any storage requirements on the Emergency Contact/Medical Information form, which should be updated as needed, and reviewed at least once a year.

Emergency Plans

Play On Philly follows all the shelter-in-place and emergency plans recommended by our host schools. For more details for your specific Music Center, please reach out to your Site Coordinator.

Daily Attendance

POP students are required to attend program 5 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 student is involved in Musicopia or another similar music organization.
- 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 would be 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.

Early Pick-Up

Students are required to attend program for the full two hours each day. In the event that a child must be picked-up early, parents must notify the Site Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance. **No early pick-up is permitted during the last 30 minutes of program each day.**

Late Pick-Up

Parent/guardian(s) are responsible for picking-up student(s) promptly after the end of program. At 15 minutes late, a fee of \$5 will be charged. For every additional five minutes, an additional \$5 fee will be applied.

Late fees, paid by check or money order (NO CASH), must be remitted to the Site Coordinator within two business days. Failure to pay the late fees on time will result in a student's suspension from POP. Upon remittance of payment, a student may return to program.

Permission to Leave Alone

With the written consent of the parent/guardian, a student may leave the premises at the end of program by themselves. Without this express consent, Play on Philly staff will not let a student leave the building; this includes meeting a parent at the curb.

Pick-ups by Non-Preapproved Adults

At the start of the school year you will be required to inform POP staff which individuals have your permission to pick-up your child. If none of the individuals whose information you have provided in advance are available to pick-up your child, you **must first call the Site Coordinator** to inform them of the change, **then send a follow-up email with the name and DOB of the individual** who will be picking up your child. When that person arrives, they will be asked to provide a photo ID with their name and DOB, which will be recorded by the Site Coordinator, before they depart.

Student Leave of Absence

Since learning an instrument takes consistent time and dedication, POP is a year-round activity. If a student in the 5-8 grade, with good attendance, wishes to participate in another extracurricular activity (sports, textile club, homework club, dance, etc.) during program hours, they may request a Leave of Absence during one full POP Session. We strongly encourage that students continue to practice their instrument on their own to avoid falling too far behind.

Instrument Loans

Instruments are loaned to students as needed. They may bring them home at the discretion of their studio teachers. 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

POP has an ambitious schedule of activities and for all of our students to receive the maximum benefits from being involved with POP, we need to be able to contact families quickly and share a lot of information. POP communicates in many formats to ensure that information is shared with everyone and quickly.

We use newsletters, sent to parents/guardians, to share information about upcoming events, no-program days and special schedules related to concerts and juries. We also share exciting POP news and updates.

We use texts, emails and calls, to parents/guardians, to remind families about no-POP days, overdue permission slips, behavior issues and special event reminders.

Beginning in 9th grade, we want to instill independence and responsibility in our young musicians. As such, we expect them to manage their own schedules and will send them communication regarding rehearsals, repertoire, special events, etc. Parents and guardians will be copied on

many of these communications, but we expect your student to respond on their own behalf.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to assist in the day-to-day operations and special events at Play On Philly. If you would like to volunteer your time you can help by:

1. Helping with Program Set up - This task is for those who can help at the same time every day to set-up snack, watch students while on break or assist with dismissal.
2. Coordinating a Concert Clothing Drive - This opportunity is seasonal and requires someone to communicate the times and dates of the drive and organize volunteers to help with clothing drop-off.
3. Coordinating Concert Receptions - During site-concerts (December and March), parents gather to organize after-concert food and beverages. Volunteers are needed to organize food drop-off, food service and clean-up.

The state requires that all volunteers who work with children complete the following three clearances. These clearances are due no later than one week prior to your start date.

1. PA Child Abuse History Clearance
2. PA State Police Criminal Record Check
3. FBI Criminal Background Check:

Please see your Site Coordinator if you'd like more details about how to complete clearances or are interested in getting started.

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. These expectations are in addition to your school's code of conduct.

General Guidelines

- Student cannot chew gum, or bring food or drink (except water) with them to classes or rehearsals.
- Students are expected to adhere to their schools dress code. Students are not permitted to wear hoodies, hats, gloves and coats during class time.

- Personal belongings should be neatly put away in the designated secure location and will remain there until dismissal. No personal belongings should follow students to their studio or ensemble classes.
- Cell phones are strictly prohibited during POP time and must be stored in a student's backpack. During dismissal, a student may use their cell phone to communicate with a parent/guardian only after asking for permission from a POP staff member after which it must be stowed away.
- Students are expected to follow all POP rules during off-site performances and field trips.
- Students are expected to show their fellow musicians respect during all performances by sitting quietly and attentively.

Zero-Tolerance

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

- Threatening violence
- Fighting/Unwelcome physical contact
- Leaving school buildings without permission
- Inappropriate Language
- Sexual Harassment
- Instrument damage due to neglect
- Stealing
- Bullying

Citizenship Recognition

POP celebrates students who adhere to the POP code of conduct and who demonstrate preparedness, collaboration with others and helpful initiative. While each Site Coordinator may choose to celebrate these role models differently, each Music Center selects up to two Students of the Month by awarding them a certificate and tickets to an upcoming professional concert. POP is proud to recognize students who model qualities such as leadership, sharing, helpfulness and empathy.

Citizenship Infractions

At some point, 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". For those students who are old enough, we ask that they complete the first section outlining their behavior. If the situation requires, a student may be removed from the classroom. These documents help POP students, families and staff understand and agree on what was problematic and what can be corrected for the future. In most circumstances, students will be given opportunities to correct their behaviors.

First Infraction:

1. Reflection Sheet is issued.
2. Site Coordinator will call parents/guardians.
3. Reflection sheet is signed and returned the following school day for the student to return.

Second Infraction:

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

Third Infraction:

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

Fourth and Final Infraction:

If a student breaks their behavior contract for a fourth time, they will earn a fourth reflection sheet and will be suspended for the duration of the session. The Site Coordinator will determine whether the student should return to the program in the following session. They 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. Please note that in addition to POP's guidelines, all school rules apply during POP hours. 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 including 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 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 daily, two-hour instruction, 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.

Parents are required to pay a non-refundable participation fee. Participation fees can be paid by check, money order, or credit card -- **NO CASH**

The participation fee must be paid in full or a payment plan must be arranged on or before the first day of POP. Your **child is not enrolled in POP** if we have not received all registration forms and payment towards the participation fee.

Payment Plan Due Dates

| | DUE DATE |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Installment One | September 30 (first day of POP) |
| Installment Two | October 31 |
| Installment Three | December 2 |