

Special Music School at Kaufman Music Center:

129 West 67th Street
New York, NY 10023

212 501 3390 (K-8)
212 501 3395 (High School)
smsa@kaufmanmusiccenter.org
KaufmanMusicCenter.org/MCH

"Going to a regular academic school and also being able to have music lessons, playing an instrument, chorus, ear training and theory – it all comes together here, and that's really special because not many schools have that."

– Special Music School student

Special Music School (SMS) is a groundbreaking New York City public school for musically gifted children that combines rigorous academics with an intensive music education. Located on New York City's Upper West Side near Lincoln Center, SMS is the only public school in the U.S. that offers private music education during the regular school day starting in kindergarten. Students build a strong foundation for a lifetime of music through private lessons as well as classes in theory, chorus, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, music history and performance taught by distinguished music professionals.

Founded in 1996 as a K-8 program, SMS expanded into the high school grades in the fall of 2013, establishing SMS as the only K-12 school in New York City with music as a core subject. At a time of great change in the classical music world, **Special Music High School** educates young musicians for 21st century music careers, emphasizing improvisation, composition, music technology and contemporary music in addition to building a strong classical foundation. The school is unique even among New York's highly regarded arts high schools in providing talented young musicians the opportunity to pursue serious, pre-professional music studies along with a rigorous Regents-based academic curriculum.

Musical and Academic Achievements

SMS students excel both musically and academically, distinguishing themselves as performers while consistently scoring at or near the top of all New York City public schools on statewide and citywide reading and math tests.

- In 2010 *The Wall Street Journal* ranked SMS 7th in its list of top-scoring schools.
- For the past four years, 95% or more of SMS students met or exceeded grade standards on the statewide English Language Arts exams; 98% or more met or exceeded grade standards in math.
- SMS students have won music competitions including the Interschool Orchestra Concerto Competition, the CT International Young Artist Competition, the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition, the National Flute Association Competition and the Alexander and Buono International String Competition.
- The SMS Chorus has performed at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall with the Opera Orchestra of New York and at Trinity Wall Street as part of its Visiting Choir series.
- SMS received an "A" on its first progress report in 2009-10.
- All SMS 8th graders complete Integrated Algebra and take the New York State Math Regents for 9th grade.
- SMS students regularly perform at prestigious music festivals such as the **Bang on a Can Marathon**, the **Look and Listen Festival**, the **Ecstatic Music Festival®** and the **River to River Festival** and have been broadcast on **New York Public Radio**.

- SMS was one of the first middle schools to offer the Advanced Placement Test in Music Theory in 2010. 12 of the 14 8th graders who took the test passed.
- SMS students have worked with well-known composers such as **Nico Muhly** and **Meredith Monk**, with whom they participated in a special residency that culminated in a performance at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

How is Special Music School Funded?

Tuition is free for children living in the five boroughs of New York City. SMS is a unique partnership between the NYC Department of Education, which funds the academics, and Kaufman Music Center, which funds the music program through private contributions.

Who is Eligible for Admission?

Children living in any of New York City's five boroughs may apply for admission. Tuition is free. Acceptance of K-2 students is based solely on an assessment of musical giftedness through a series of age-appropriate individual and group activities relating to music; no prior musical training is necessary. Children applying for grades three and above will have an instrumental audition. For admission information, visit KaufmanMusicCenter.org/SMS/admissions, or call 212 501 3390 (K-8) or 212 501 3395 (High School).

Kaufman Music Center is New York's go-to place for music education and performance.

It's where music lovers, from curious fans to renowned performers, come together to explore their musical passions. Founded in 1952 as a community music school, today's Kaufman Music Center is one of the city's most vibrant cultural organizations, combining world-class teaching with electrifying performances featuring rising young classical stars, Broadway icons and cutting-edge performer/composers who are re-defining contemporary music. Kaufman Music Center is home to **Lucy Moses School**, **Merkin Concert Hall** and **Special Music School**, New York's only K-12 public school for musically gifted children.