OrchKids is excited to announce that we are expanding! Two additional school sites will be added this Fall: Mt. Royal Elementary & Middle School and Brehms Lane Public Charter School.

**Bringing the band back!**

While Mt. Royal is new to the OrchKids family, the school has a rich history of musical excellence in Baltimore City. For many years, Mt. Royal’s band was well known throughout the area. Unfortunately, due to staffing changes, Mt. Royal has not had a robust instrumental music program in recent years. OrchKids is very excited to partner with Mt. Royal and bring instrumental music back to the school! Specifically, OrchKids will be supporting the school’s newly appointed, full-time music instructor (and former OrchKids teaching artist), Russell Kirk, with a full, in-school band program and potentially string orchestra classes in the future. This program will serve over 100 students including instrument specific instruction from OrchKids’ teaching artists, workshops, guest artist performances, and field trip opportunities.

**Old friends**

While OrchKids’ partnership with Brehms Lane is new, our friendship with the school’s Principal, Mrs. Diya Hafiz-Slayton, goes back many years when she was the Assistant Principle at Patterson Park Public Charter School. We are excited to partner with her again at Brehms Lane and look forward to meeting all of her new students. OrchKids will be providing in-school musicianship instruction for students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade. Each student will receive two 45-minute musicianship classes per week and will serve approximately 275 students. As with Mt. Royal, students will also have opportunities to go on field trips, see performances by guest artists, and participate in OrchKids’ collective composition workshops.

In addition to our two new school sites, OrchKids is expanding its in-school programming at Patterson Park Public Charter School (PPPCS) to include more students. This new programming - for 2nd grade students - will include Intensive Exploratory Music classes covering instrument basics with trumpet, violin and recorder. This is an extension of OrchKids current 1st grade programming, Introduction to Exploratory Music. Second grade students will now have the opportunity to further and enhance their beginning instrumental skills. These additional OrchKids classes will serve an extra 80 students at PPPCS.

Fall of 2019 will be an exiting time for the OrchKids program as we increase our reach from 1,600 students to over 2,000 students. Through our expansion of regular programming and our increase in delivering workshops to schools around Baltimore city, we will serve over 500 new students during the 2019-2020 school year. This is all thanks to our amazing partners and donors who continue to support our program. We cannot thank you enough!
OrchKids Goes to Boarding School

Nijaya Brown, left, at Interlochen Summer Arts Camp.

OrchKids student and flutist, Nijaya Brown, is off to Michigan! Nijaya has been accepted to the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy boarding high school. This Fall, she will begin her 9th grade year at the academy located in northern Michigan – that’s a long way from home!

A long-time summer partner for OrchKids students, Interlochen is also a world-renowned high school and music academy which hosts thousands of artists and arts patrons each year. Students study music, theatre, visual arts, film, creative writing and dance, all led by outstanding faculty and guest artists, and inspired by the scenic beauty of Interlochen’s campus. Interlochen began its partnership with OrchKids more than five years ago, providing both full and partial scholarships to Baltimore students for summer camp. Since that time, many OrchKids have traveled to Michigan to participate in their summer music programs. In addition to the scholarships, Interlochen has graciously held auditions for their Summer Arts Camps within the Baltimore communities that OrchKids serves, providing easier access for our students.

Nijaya Brown started her relationship with Interlochen two years ago when she attended their Summer Arts Camp for the first time, through OrchKids. This summer, she returned for a third time, leaving about a week to come home.

OrchKids Summer Travels

Each summer, OrchKids sends students to outside summer programs to enrich their music education and introduce them to outstanding teaching artists and peer musicians. Thanks again to Southwest Airlines for providing OrchKids with travel vouchers for all our students this summer.

Indiana:
- Indiana University Summer Music Clinic

Maine:
- Camp Encore/Coda

Maryland:
- American Music Camp
- Kingdom Flute Works
- Peabody Summer Session

Michigan:
- Interlochen Arts Camp
- Archipelago Summer Music Camp

New York:
- Ithaca College Summer Music Academy

Austria:
- Alpine Brass Festival

Total Number of Students Traveling: 41
OrchKids Summer Program Highlights

Week 1: Collective Composition Workshop

Weeks 1-4: Y of Central Maryland provided structured recess for our students!

Weeks 1-4: Free Healthy Meals were served for breakfast and lunch!

Weeks 2-4: Music Classes including a new summer favorite: Steelpans!

A Very Special Donation

This year we have a very special addition to our program – a lovely violin on loan from Maestra Marin Alsop! This violin was made by longtime friend of the Maestra, Maike Buyle, in Belgium. Buyle was inspired by the work of the OrchKids program and wanted to contribute to creating brighter futures for Baltimore’s youth. OrchKids student Nema Robinson, is the lucky student who gets to play this remarkable violin. After being in the program for many years, Nema has demonstrated her talent and commitment to music. It’s a unique opportunity for Nema to be able to play such a beautiful instrument made by the Maestra’s close friend. Nema is debuting her new instrument this summer during her six week stay at Camp Encore/Coda in Sweden, Maine.

OrchKids student Nema Robinson at Camp Encore/Coda

Instrument donations are critical to the OrchKids program. As we serve over 1,600 students currently and anticipate over 2,000 students in the coming year, it is vital that we have instruments for every student. OrchKids relies on donations from individuals and also from organizations like the Carroll County Arts Council, who gave 38 instruments to the program this past Spring. Partnerships from music stores like Menchey Music are also imperative to the success of our students. Menchey has partnered with OrchKids for more than three years, servicing our instruments and even giving monetary donations to the program.

What makes donated instruments special is the history and relationships that come with them. Many instruments will serve multiple performers throughout their life – some instruments even have a life-span of over 100 years. For Baltimore youth to be a part of an instruments’ story is extraordinary. Here at OrchKids, we see the narrative of Baltimore changing every day to include music, art, and inspiring youth rather than conflict and violence. Its incredible to think of how many instruments will change hands over the years but will always have Baltimore as a part of their story. That’s all because of OrchKids and the generosity of individuals who donate to our program.