



# PING! (Providing Instruments for the Next Generation)

## How many events/productions does your group offer to the children annually?

- ❖ PING! supports the D97 Instrumental Music Curriculum by ensuring that all students have equitable access to that curriculum, regardless of their ability to pay, at NO cost to D97.
- ❖ With the instruments provided by PING!:
  - ❖ 50–60 additional 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders participate in weekly band and orchestra annually.
  - ❖ 30–40 additional middle schoolers participate in daily band and orchestra classes annually.
  - ❖ PING! students perform with their peers in the D97 concerts & camps.
- ❖ PING! also provides enrichment events outside of the school day to provide parity:
  - ❖ Two enrichment workshops/year for PING! 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders (20-25 students)
  - ❖ After school mentoring for 25-30 middle schoolers every other week throughout the school year with an end-of-year showcase
  - ❖ Scholarships so that PING! students can participate in the middle-school music tour field trips and music summer camps.



## How many children participate in your offerings annually?

- ❖ Over the last five years, between 89–125 D97 4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in band or orchestra because of PING! each year (average: 98 students per year).
- ❖ Over the past 10 years, this accounts for approximately 7-9% of all D97 instrumental music students.

## What is the diversity of the participants?

- ❖ PING! does not track race or ethnicity of its participants. All students come from families in need. PING! eligibility is based on one or more of the following:
  - ❖ Family qualifies for Free or Reduced Lunch or Fee Waiver status.
  - ❖ Student is a foster child or is being raised by a guardian or family member other than a parent.
  - ❖ Exceptional family circumstances at this time (single parent, temporary job loss/transition, family health issues, housing issues, special needs).
  - ❖ Current family income makes renting an instrument a significant financial burden that would prohibit student(s) from participating in band or orchestra at school.



## What is the practice/meeting schedule for the students?

- ❖ PING! students are enrolled in their school's band or orchestra classes.
  - ❖ Per the instrumental music set up in D97, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders meet once and twice a week respectively. Middle schoolers meet every day as instrumental music is an elective taken during the regular school day.
- ❖ PING! middle school students can also participate in PING!'s mentor program which meets every other week at Brooks and Julian. High school musicians from OPRF come to provide a one-on-one hour-long lesson for these students.
- ❖ PING! students are encouraged to practice according to their D97 teacher assignments. Practice logs are provided to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- ❖ PING! students can also attend concerts and performances locally and in the city as part of field trips with PING! or with complimentary tickets secured by PING!



## How do the students get involved in the group?

- ❖ Families who want their student to play a band or orchestra instrument usually start with the D97 instrumental music informational meetings.
- ❖ Information to D97 parents is shared in various ways to raise awareness that PING! exists to help families in need:
  - ❖ Emails to school principals, social workers, teachers
  - ❖ Information in the D97 electronic backpack, Twitter, and teacher websites
  - ❖ Communication from the D97 instrumental teachers, offering PING! as an option to “renting”
  - ❖ PTO presentations, community outreach, and word of mouth
- ❖ PING! fall sign-up and spring renewal process
  - ❖ For sign-up, PING! participates in the D97 instrumental music sign-up nights in September alongside the businesses that rent instruments.
  - ❖ PING! also conducts three events in the spring so that PING! families can renew their contract and keep their instrument over the summer.



What efforts are made by the organization to be inclusive and recruit children who may not initiate joining the activity on their own?

- ❖ PING!'s policy is to never turn away an eligible family. Students are ensured their first choice of instrument.
- ❖ PING! makes a significant effort to accommodate parents who want to sign up or renew with PING! Late sign-ups/renewal are conducted in person, by mail, or email for families that cannot attend sign-up/renewal dates.
- ❖ PING! students may not always have the family structure or support to be successful in instrumental music like their more affluent peers. Throughout the school year we work with teachers and families to ensure students are attending classes and practicing, that their instruments are functioning properly, and that they have the instrument supplies necessary to succeed.
- ❖ PING! enrichment events are designed to motivate and energize students throughout the year.



## How do Special Education children become involved?

- ❖ **Any student whose family qualifies under PING!'s eligibility requirements can be served by PING! We do not turn away any student based on special needs designations.**
- ❖ **We work with the D97 music teachers to provide guidance about which instruments the students might be most successful in playing.**

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Please share an overview of students impacted by both quantity and quality of the experience.

- ❖ In the 20 years that PING! has supported the D97 instrumental music program:
  - ❖ 569 low-income, underserved students have participated, who otherwise would not have been in D97 instrumental music classes.
  - ❖ This results in over 1250 years of instrumental music instruction.

*"We appreciate the instrument, the free tune ups and service, the guides, the music store which is always helpful. The PING! staff have always been professional, thoughtful, and kind. They have never made us feel bad, sad, or hopeless."*

*–Janice B., Grandmother of a PING! Student*

*"Definitely, I've learned teamwork skills, how to cooperate with people on pieces. I've definitely learned how to pitch in and do my part in a big project like a piece of music."*

*– Don Y., PING! Student*

*"Thank you so much for all you are doing for our children. All your effort and hard work to provide this and other great opportunities for them is priceless. PING! has a very clear picture of how important it is to invest in the youth and future generation."*

*–Lisette M., Mother of PING! student*



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Do your personnel have duties in D97 (e.g., teaching any classes or doing any additional work?)

- ❖ **PING! is a volunteer-run organization and a 501(c)3 independent of D97.**
- ❖ **The cost of running the program is raised entirely by the PING! Board, while D97 generously supports PING! with use of the Hatch closet, access to D97's print shop, and rooms for mentoring lessons and workshops.**
- ❖ **We collaborate closely with D97 to ensure the PING! students' access and success.**
  - ❖ **Work with school personnel to identify students in families that can benefit from PING!'s services.**
  - ❖ **Communicate frequently with instrumental music teachers to support the PING! students and their families.**
  - ❖ **Pay stipends to D97 teachers to conduct enrichment workshops.**
  - ❖ **Coordinate with D97 for building use needs.**





## Final thoughts you would like to share

- ❖ Ample research demonstrates the cognitive, academic, and social benefits of exposure to instrumental music instruction.
- ❖ Additional research points to the specific benefits of instrumental music instruction to under-served and at-risk students, including a sense of belonging, exposure to hands-on learning, opportunities for positive self-expression, and encouragement of self-discipline, diligence, and teamwork.
- ❖ The instrumental music programs in D97 are excellent and play an important role in the in- and out-of-school success of D97 students.
- ❖ The cost of renting, supplying and maintaining an instrument, however, can be more than \$500 a year. This makes it impossible for all D97 students who want to participate to be able to do so.
- ❖ PING! plays a critical role in promoting equity and the success of all youth by removing barriers to participation in these excellent D97 programs, whether they be financial, health, or otherwise, at NO COST to D97.