

Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax

2023

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except private foundations)

Do not enter social security numbers on this form as it may be made public.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

Open to Public Inspection

A For the **2023** calendar year, or tax year beginning **09/01/2023** and ending **08/31/2024**

B Check if applicable:

- Address change
- Name change
- Initial return
- Final return/terminated
- Amended return
- Application pending

C Name of organization **MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

Doing business as

Number and street (or P.O. box if mail is not delivered to street address) Room/suite
38 South Peoria Street

City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code
Chicago, IL 60607

F Name and address of principal officer: **Amy Johnson**
38 South Peoria Street, Chicago, IL 60607

D Employer identification number
36-3028768

E Telephone number
312-786-9428

G Gross receipts \$ **13,516,681**

H(a) Is this a group return for subordinates? Yes No

H(b) Are all subordinates included? Yes No

If "No," attach a list. See instructions.

H(c) Group exemption number

I Tax-exempt status: 501(c)(3) 501(c) () (insert no.) 4947(a)(1) or 527

J Website: meritmusic.org

K Form of organization: Corporation Trust Association Other

L Year of formation: **1979**

M State of legal domicile: **IL**

Part I Summary

Activities & Governance	1	Briefly describe the organization's mission or most significant activities: <u>Merit School of Music transforms the lives of Chicago-area youth through removing barriers to high-quality music education.</u>		
	2	Check this box <input type="checkbox"/> if the organization discontinued its operations or disposed of more than 25% of its net assets.		
	3	Number of voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1a)	3	30
	4	Number of independent voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1b)	4	30
	5	Total number of individuals employed in calendar year 2023 (Part V, line 2a)	5	203
	6	Total number of volunteers (estimate if necessary)	6	55
	7a	Total unrelated business revenue from Part VIII, column (C), line 12	7a	0
b	Net unrelated business taxable income from Form 990-T, Part I, line 11	7b	0	
Revenue	8	Contributions and grants (Part VIII, line 1h)	Prior Year 7,414,559	Current Year 9,308,296
	9	Program service revenue (Part VIII, line 2g)	2,555,595	2,822,223
	10	Investment income (Part VIII, column (A), lines 3, 4, and 7d)	1,574,554	3,628,161
	11	Other revenue (Part VIII, column (A), lines 5, 6d, 8c, 9c, 10c, and 11e)	173,581	199,448
	12	Total revenue—add lines 8 through 11 (must equal Part VIII, column (A), line 12)	11,718,289	15,958,128
Expenses	13	Grants and similar amounts paid (Part IX, column (A), lines 1–3)	912,255	820,545
	14	Benefits paid to or for members (Part IX, column (A), line 4)	0	0
	15	Salaries, other compensation, employee benefits (Part IX, column (A), lines 5–10)	5,781,687	6,302,225
	16a	Professional fundraising fees (Part IX, column (A), line 11e)	0	0
	b	Total fundraising expenses (Part IX, column (D), line 25)	643,995	
	17	Other expenses (Part IX, column (A), lines 11a–11d, 11f–24e)	1,697,593	2,048,193
18	Total expenses. Add lines 13–17 (must equal Part IX, column (A), line 25)	8,391,535	9,170,963	
19	Revenue less expenses. Subtract line 18 from line 12	3,326,754	6,787,165	
Net Assets or Fund Balances	20	Total assets (Part X, line 16)	Beginning of Current Year 35,999,488	End of Year 42,968,720
	21	Total liabilities (Part X, line 26)	1,255,569	1,437,636
	22	Net assets or fund balances. Subtract line 21 from line 20	34,743,919	41,531,084

Part II Signature Block

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this return, including accompanying schedules and statements, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete. Declaration of preparer (other than officer) is based on all information of which preparer has any knowledge.

Sign Here

Signature of officer: Amy Johnson, VP for Finance & Administration Date: _____

Type or print name and title

Paid Preparer Use Only

Print/Type preparer's name: _____ Preparer's signature: _____ Date: _____ Check if self-employed PTIN: _____

Firm's name: _____ Firm's EIN: _____

Firm's address: _____ Phone no.: _____

May the IRS discuss this return with the preparer shown above? See instructions Yes No

Part III Statement of Program Service Accomplishments

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part III

1 Briefly describe the organization's mission:

Merit School of Music is dedicated to helping young people transform their lives by removing barriers to high-quality music education, with the majority of students benefitting from need-based financial aid, scholarship support, or low-cost instrument rental. Merit enables motivated students, regardless of economic circumstance, to develop their talent and to use music as a
(Continued on Schedule O, Statement 2)

2 Did the organization undertake any significant program services during the year which were not listed on the prior Form 990 or 990-EZ? Yes No

If "Yes," describe these new services on Schedule O.

3 Did the organization cease conducting, or make significant changes in how it conducts, any program services? Yes No

If "Yes," describe these changes on Schedule O.

4 Describe the organization's program service accomplishments for each of its three largest program services, as measured by expenses. Section 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations are required to report the amount of grants and allocations to others, the total expenses, and revenue, if any, for each program service reported.

4a (Code:) (Expenses \$ 1,501,874 including grants of \$ 48,000) (Revenue \$ 494,809)

Merit Music in Communities (MMiC) is a community-based program, supporting Chicago schools and community centers whose students have little or no access to music instruction through school, or privately. Individual programs vary by size and type to meet the individual needs, preferences, and resources of partner sites. MMiC operates in approximately 22 sites, serving children K-12th grade with programs in band, strings, guitar, choir, Early Childhood, and General Music.

4b (Code:) (Expenses \$ 2,449,964 including grants of \$ 303,450) (Revenue \$ 1,498,556)

Private Lessons are available to all students and essential for Conservatory students. Discounted Private Lessons and need-based financial aid make lessons affordable for lower-income students. Lessons are offered in brass, winds, strings, percussion, piano, guitar, jazz, voice, composition/theory.

4c (Code:) (Expenses \$ 1,141,401 including grants of \$ 101,150) (Revenue \$ 353,758)

Merit's Instrumental & Vocal Music program supports children K-9th grade, offering group classes in piano, voice, guitar, strings, and band (brass, woodwinds, percussion). Band, string, and voice students also participate in large ensembles. The program offers financial aid (up to 75%) to qualifying families and prepares students with an interest to audition successfully for the Conservatory.

4d Other program services (Describe on Schedule O.) See Schedule O, Statement 3
(Expenses \$ 2,158,643 including grants of \$ 180,578) (Revenue \$ 258,796)

4e Total program service expenses 7,251,882

Part IV Checklist of Required Schedules

	Yes	No
1 Is the organization described in section 501(c)(3) or 4947(a)(1) (other than a private foundation)? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule A</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Is the organization required to complete Schedule B, Schedule of Contributors? See instructions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Did the organization engage in direct or indirect political campaign activities on behalf of or in opposition to candidates for public office? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule C, Part I</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4 Section 501(c)(3) organizations. Did the organization engage in lobbying activities, or have a section 501(h) election in effect during the tax year? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule C, Part II</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5 Is the organization a section 501(c)(4), 501(c)(5), or 501(c)(6) organization that receives membership dues, assessments, or similar amounts as defined in Rev. Proc. 98-19? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule C, Part III</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6 Did the organization maintain any donor advised funds or any similar funds or accounts for which donors have the right to provide advice on the distribution or investment of amounts in such funds or accounts? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part I</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7 Did the organization receive or hold a conservation easement, including easements to preserve open space, the environment, historic land areas, or historic structures? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part II</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8 Did the organization maintain collections of works of art, historical treasures, or other similar assets? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part III</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9 Did the organization report an amount in Part X, line 21, for escrow or custodial account liability; serve as a custodian for amounts not listed in Part X; or provide credit counseling, debt management, credit repair, or debt negotiation services? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part IV</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10 Did the organization, directly or through a related organization, hold assets in donor-restricted endowments or in quasi-endowments? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part V</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 If the organization's answer to any of the following questions is "Yes," then complete Schedule D, Parts VI, VII, VIII, IX, or X, as applicable.		
a Did the organization report an amount for land, buildings, and equipment in Part X, line 10? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part VI</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b Did the organization report an amount for investments—other securities in Part X, line 12, that is 5% or more of its total assets reported in Part X, line 16? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part VII</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c Did the organization report an amount for investments—program related in Part X, line 13, that is 5% or more of its total assets reported in Part X, line 16? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part VIII</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d Did the organization report an amount for other assets in Part X, line 15, that is 5% or more of its total assets reported in Part X, line 16? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part IX</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e Did the organization report an amount for other liabilities in Part X, line 25? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part X</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f Did the organization's separate or consolidated financial statements for the tax year include a footnote that addresses the organization's liability for uncertain tax positions under FIN 48 (ASC 740)? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Part X</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12a Did the organization obtain separate, independent audited financial statements for the tax year? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule D, Parts XI and XII</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b Was the organization included in consolidated, independent audited financial statements for the tax year? <i>If "Yes," and if the organization answered "No" to line 12a, then completing Schedule D, Parts XI and XII is optional</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13 Is the organization a school described in section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii)? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule E</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14a Did the organization maintain an office, employees, or agents outside of the United States?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b Did the organization have aggregate revenues or expenses of more than \$10,000 from grantmaking, fundraising, business, investment, and program service activities outside the United States, or aggregate foreign investments valued at \$100,000 or more? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule F, Parts I and IV</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15 Did the organization report on Part IX, column (A), line 3, more than \$5,000 of grants or other assistance to or for any foreign organization? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule F, Parts II and IV</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16 Did the organization report on Part IX, column (A), line 3, more than \$5,000 of aggregate grants or other assistance to or for foreign individuals? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule F, Parts III and IV</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17 Did the organization report a total of more than \$15,000 of expenses for professional fundraising services on Part IX, column (A), lines 6 and 11e? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule G, Part I. See instructions</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18 Did the organization report more than \$15,000 total of fundraising event gross income and contributions on Part VIII, lines 1c and 8a? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule G, Part II</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Did the organization report more than \$15,000 of gross income from gaming activities on Part VIII, line 9a? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule G, Part III</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20a Did the organization operate one or more hospital facilities? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule H</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b If "Yes" to line 20a, did the organization attach a copy of its audited financial statements to this return?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 Did the organization report more than \$5,000 of grants or other assistance to any domestic organization or domestic government on Part IX, column (A), line 1? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule I, Parts I and II</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Part IV Checklist of Required Schedules *(continued)*

		Yes	No
22	Did the organization report more than \$5,000 of grants or other assistance to or for domestic individuals on Part IX, column (A), line 2? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule I, Parts I and III</i>	22	✓
23	Did the organization answer "Yes" to Part VII, Section A, line 3, 4, or 5, about compensation of the organization's current and former officers, directors, trustees, key employees, and highest compensated employees? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule J</i>	23	✓
24a	Did the organization have a tax-exempt bond issue with an outstanding principal amount of more than \$100,000 as of the last day of the year, that was issued after December 31, 2002? <i>If "Yes," answer lines 24b through 24d and complete Schedule K. If "No," go to line 25a</i>	24a	✓
b	Did the organization invest any proceeds of tax-exempt bonds beyond a temporary period exception?	24b	
c	Did the organization maintain an escrow account other than a refunding escrow at any time during the year to defease any tax-exempt bonds?	24c	
d	Did the organization act as an "on behalf of" issuer for bonds outstanding at any time during the year?	24d	
25a	Section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(29) organizations. Did the organization engage in an excess benefit transaction with a disqualified person during the year? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part I</i>	25a	✓
b	Is the organization aware that it engaged in an excess benefit transaction with a disqualified person in a prior year, and that the transaction has not been reported on any of the organization's prior Forms 990 or 990-EZ? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part I</i>	25b	✓
26	Did the organization report any amount on Part X, line 5 or 22, for receivables from or payables to any current or former officer, director, trustee, key employee, creator or founder, substantial contributor, or 35% controlled entity or family member of any of these persons? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part II</i>	26	✓
27	Did the organization provide a grant or other assistance to any current or former officer, director, trustee, key employee, creator or founder, substantial contributor or employee thereof, a grant selection committee member, or to a 35% controlled entity (including an employee thereof) or family member of any of these persons? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part III</i>	27	✓
28	Was the organization a party to a business transaction with one of the following parties? (See the Schedule L, Part IV, instructions for applicable filing thresholds, conditions, and exceptions).		
a	A current or former officer, director, trustee, key employee, creator or founder, or substantial contributor? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part IV</i>	28a	✓
b	A family member of any individual described in line 28a? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part IV</i>	28b	✓
c	A 35% controlled entity of one or more individuals and/or organizations described in line 28a or 28b? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part IV</i>	28c	✓
29	Did the organization receive more than \$25,000 in noncash contributions? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule M</i>	29	✓
30	Did the organization receive contributions of art, historical treasures, or other similar assets, or qualified conservation contributions? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule M</i>	30	✓
31	Did the organization liquidate, terminate, or dissolve and cease operations? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule N, Part I</i>	31	✓
32	Did the organization sell, exchange, dispose of, or transfer more than 25% of its net assets? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule N, Part II</i>	32	✓
33	Did the organization own 100% of an entity disregarded as separate from the organization under Regulations sections 301.7701-2 and 301.7701-3? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule R, Part I</i>	33	✓
34	Was the organization related to any tax-exempt or taxable entity? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule R, Part II, III, or IV, and Part V, line 1</i>	34	✓
35a	Did the organization have a controlled entity within the meaning of section 512(b)(13)?	35a	✓
b	If "Yes" to line 35a, did the organization receive any payment from or engage in any transaction with a controlled entity within the meaning of section 512(b)(13)? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule R, Part V, line 2</i>	35b	
36	Section 501(c)(3) organizations. Did the organization make any transfers to an exempt non-charitable related organization? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule R, Part V, line 2</i>	36	✓
37	Did the organization conduct more than 5% of its activities through an entity that is not a related organization and that is treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule R, Part VI</i>	37	✓
38	Did the organization complete Schedule O and provide explanations on Schedule O for Part VI, lines 11b and 19? Note: All Form 990 filers are required to complete Schedule O	38	✓

Part V Statements Regarding Other IRS Filings and Tax Compliance

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part V

		Yes	No
1a	Enter the number reported in box 3 of Form 1096. Enter -0- if not applicable	1a	84
b	Enter the number of Forms W-2G included on line 1a. Enter -0- if not applicable	1b	0
c	Did the organization comply with backup withholding rules for reportable payments to vendors and reportable gaming (gambling) winnings to prize winners?	1c	✓

Part V Statements Regarding Other IRS Filings and Tax Compliance <i>(continued)</i>		Yes	No		
2a	Enter the number of employees reported on Form W-3, Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statements, filed for the calendar year ending with or within the year covered by this return	2a	203		
b	If at least one is reported on line 2a, did the organization file all required federal employment tax returns?	2b		✓	
3a	Did the organization have unrelated business gross income of \$1,000 or more during the year?	3a			✓
b	If "Yes," has it filed a Form 990-T for this year? <i>If "No" to line 3b, provide an explanation on Schedule O</i>	3b			
4a	At any time during the calendar year, did the organization have an interest in, or a signature or other authority over, a financial account in a foreign country (such as a bank account, securities account, or other financial account)?	4a			✓
b	If "Yes," enter the name of the foreign country _____ See instructions for filing requirements for FinCEN Form 114, Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBAR).				
5a	Was the organization a party to a prohibited tax shelter transaction at any time during the tax year?	5a			✓
b	Did any taxable party notify the organization that it was or is a party to a prohibited tax shelter transaction?	5b			✓
c	If "Yes" to line 5a or 5b, did the organization file Form 8886-T?	5c			
6a	Does the organization have annual gross receipts that are normally greater than \$100,000, and did the organization solicit any contributions that were not tax deductible as charitable contributions?	6a			✓
b	If "Yes," did the organization include with every solicitation an express statement that such contributions or gifts were not tax deductible?	6b			
7	Organizations that may receive deductible contributions under section 170(c).				
a	Did the organization receive a payment in excess of \$75 made partly as a contribution and partly for goods and services provided to the payor?	7a		✓	
b	If "Yes," did the organization notify the donor of the value of the goods or services provided?	7b		✓	
c	Did the organization sell, exchange, or otherwise dispose of tangible personal property for which it was required to file Form 8282?	7c			✓
d	If "Yes," indicate the number of Forms 8282 filed during the year	7d			
e	Did the organization receive any funds, directly or indirectly, to pay premiums on a personal benefit contract?	7e			✓
f	Did the organization, during the year, pay premiums, directly or indirectly, on a personal benefit contract?	7f			✓
g	If the organization received a contribution of qualified intellectual property, did the organization file Form 8899 as required?	7g			✓
h	If the organization received a contribution of cars, boats, airplanes, or other vehicles, did the organization file a Form 1098-C?	7h			✓
8	Sponsoring organizations maintaining donor advised funds. Did a donor advised fund maintained by the sponsoring organization have excess business holdings at any time during the year?	8			
9	Sponsoring organizations maintaining donor advised funds.				
a	Did the sponsoring organization make any taxable distributions under section 4966?	9a			
b	Did the sponsoring organization make a distribution to a donor, donor advisor, or related person?	9b			
10	Section 501(c)(7) organizations. Enter:				
a	Initiation fees and capital contributions included on Part VIII, line 12	10a			
b	Gross receipts, included on Form 990, Part VIII, line 12, for public use of club facilities	10b			
11	Section 501(c)(12) organizations. Enter:				
a	Gross income from members or shareholders	11a			
b	Gross income from other sources. (Do not net amounts due or paid to other sources against amounts due or received from them.)	11b			
12a	Section 4947(a)(1) non-exempt charitable trusts. Is the organization filing Form 990 in lieu of Form 1041?	12a			
b	If "Yes," enter the amount of tax-exempt interest received or accrued during the year	12b			
13	Section 501(c)(29) qualified nonprofit health insurance issuers.				
a	Is the organization licensed to issue qualified health plans in more than one state? Note: See the instructions for additional information the organization must report on Schedule O.	13a			
b	Enter the amount of reserves the organization is required to maintain by the states in which the organization is licensed to issue qualified health plans	13b			
c	Enter the amount of reserves on hand	13c			
14a	Did the organization receive any payments for indoor tanning services during the tax year?	14a			✓
b	If "Yes," has it filed a Form 720 to report these payments? <i>If "No," provide an explanation on Schedule O</i>	14b			
15	Is the organization subject to the section 4960 tax on payment(s) of more than \$1,000,000 in remuneration or excess parachute payment(s) during the year? If "Yes," see the instructions and file Form 4720, Schedule N.	15			✓
16	Is the organization an educational institution subject to the section 4968 excise tax on net investment income? If "Yes," complete Form 4720, Schedule O.	16			✓
17	Section 501(c)(21) organizations. Did the trust, or any disqualified or other person, engage in any activities that would result in the imposition of an excise tax under section 4951, 4952, or 4953? If "Yes," complete Form 6069.	17			

Part VI Governance, Management, and Disclosure. For each "Yes" response to lines 2 through 7b below, and for a "No" response to line 8a, 8b, or 10b below, describe the circumstances, processes, or changes on Schedule O. See instructions. Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part VI

Section A. Governing Body and Management

		Yes	No
1a	Enter the number of voting members of the governing body at the end of the tax year If there are material differences in voting rights among members of the governing body, or if the governing body delegated broad authority to an executive committee or similar committee, explain on Schedule O.		
	1a 30		
b	Enter the number of voting members included on line 1a, above, who are independent		
	1b 30		
2	Did any officer, director, trustee, or key employee have a family relationship or a business relationship with any other officer, director, trustee, or key employee?	✓	
3	Did the organization delegate control over management duties customarily performed by or under the direct supervision of officers, directors, trustees, or key employees to a management company or other person?		✓
4	Did the organization make any significant changes to its governing documents since the prior Form 990 was filed?		✓
5	Did the organization become aware during the year of a significant diversion of the organization's assets?		✓
6	Did the organization have members or stockholders?		✓
7a	Did the organization have members, stockholders, or other persons who had the power to elect or appoint one or more members of the governing body?		✓
b	Are any governance decisions of the organization reserved to (or subject to approval by) members, stockholders, or persons other than the governing body?		✓
8	Did the organization contemporaneously document the meetings held or written actions undertaken during the year by the following:		
a	The governing body?	✓	
b	Each committee with authority to act on behalf of the governing body?	✓	
9	Is there any officer, director, trustee, or key employee listed in Part VII, Section A, who cannot be reached at the organization's mailing address? If "Yes," provide the names and addresses on Schedule O		✓

Section B. Policies (This Section B requests information about policies not required by the Internal Revenue Code.)

		Yes	No
10a	Did the organization have local chapters, branches, or affiliates?		✓
b	If "Yes," did the organization have written policies and procedures governing the activities of such chapters, affiliates, and branches to ensure their operations are consistent with the organization's exempt purposes?		
11a	Has the organization provided a complete copy of this Form 990 to all members of its governing body before filing the form?	✓	
b	Describe on Schedule O the process, if any, used by the organization to review this Form 990.		
12a	Did the organization have a written conflict of interest policy? If "No," go to line 13	✓	
b	Were officers, directors, or trustees, and key employees required to disclose annually interests that could give rise to conflicts?	✓	
c	Did the organization regularly and consistently monitor and enforce compliance with the policy? If "Yes," describe on Schedule O how this was done	✓	
13	Did the organization have a written whistleblower policy?	✓	
14	Did the organization have a written document retention and destruction policy?	✓	
15	Did the process for determining compensation of the following persons include a review and approval by independent persons, comparability data, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision?		
a	The organization's CEO, Executive Director, or top management official	✓	
b	Other officers or key employees of the organization	✓	
	If "Yes" to line 15a or 15b, describe the process on Schedule O. See instructions.		
16a	Did the organization invest in, contribute assets to, or participate in a joint venture or similar arrangement with a taxable entity during the year?		✓
b	If "Yes," did the organization follow a written policy or procedure requiring the organization to evaluate its participation in joint venture arrangements under applicable federal tax law, and take steps to safeguard the organization's exempt status with respect to such arrangements?		

Section C. Disclosure

- 17** List the states with which a copy of this Form 990 is required to be filed IL
- 18** Section 6104 requires an organization to make its Forms 1023 (1024 or 1024-A, if applicable), 990, and 990-T (section 501(c)(3)s only) available for public inspection. Indicate how you made these available. Check all that apply.
 Own website Another's website Upon request Other (explain on Schedule O)
- 19** Describe on Schedule O whether (and if so, how) the organization made its governing documents, conflict of interest policy, and financial statements available to the public during the tax year.
- 20** State the name, address, and telephone number of the person who possesses the organization's books and records.

Amy Johnson, (312)786-9428

38 South Peoria Street, Chicago, IL 60607

Part VII Compensation of Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, Highest Compensated Employees, and Independent Contractors

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part VII

Section A. Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees

1a Complete this table for all persons required to be listed. Report compensation for the calendar year ending with or within the organization's tax year.

- List all of the organization's **current** officers, directors, trustees (whether individuals or organizations), regardless of amount of compensation. Enter -0- in columns (D), (E), and (F) if no compensation was paid.
- List all of the organization's **current** key employees, if any. See the instructions for definition of "key employee."
- List the organization's five **current** highest compensated employees (other than an officer, director, trustee, or key employee) who received reportable compensation (box 5 of Form W-2, box 6 of Form 1099-MISC, and/or box 1 of Form 1099-NEC) of more than \$100,000 from the organization and any related organizations.
- List all of the organization's **former** officers, key employees, and highest compensated employees who received more than \$100,000 of reportable compensation from the organization and any related organizations.
- List all of the organization's **former directors or trustees** that received, in the capacity as a former director or trustee of the organization, more than \$10,000 of reportable compensation from the organization and any related organizations.

See the instructions for the order in which to list the persons above.

Check this box if neither the organization nor any related organization compensated any current officer, director, or trustee.

(A) Name and title	(B) Average hours per week (list any hours for related organizations below dotted line)	(C) Position (do not check more than one box, unless person is both an officer and a director/trustee)						(D) Reportable compensation from the organization (W-2/1099-MISC/1099-NEC)	(E) Reportable compensation from related organizations (W-2/1099-MISC/1099-NEC)	(F) Estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations
		Individual trustee or director	Institutional trustee	Officer	Key employee	Highest compensated employee	Former			
Charles Grode President and Executive Director	37.50 0.00			✓			192,310	0	6,437	
Adrienne Thompson Vice President for Enrollment and Student Service	37.50 0.00			✓			147,104	0	4,566	
Meredith Barber Vice President for Development & Marketing	37.50 0.00			✓			128,514	0	4,544	
Kurtis C Gildow Vice President for Programming	37.50 0.00			✓			115,787	0	3,786	
Amy Johnson Vice President for Finance & Administration	37.50 0.00			✓			101,432	0	3,786	
Thomas Linguanti Vice Chair	2.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Julie Green Baumeister Board Chair	3.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Charles K Huebner Immediate Past Board Chair	2.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Ryan DeVore Vice Chair and Secretary	2.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Jennifer Montague Vice Chair	2.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Marisela Rosales Lawson Secretary	2.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Mike Andrews Treasurer	2.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Andy Scroggins Associate Board Representative	1.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Sonia Antolec Trustee	1.00 0.00	✓					0	0	0	

Part VII Section A. Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees *(continued)*

(A) Name and title	(B) Average hours per week (list any hours for related organizations below dotted line)	(C) Position (do not check more than one box, unless person is both an officer and a director/trustee)						(D) Reportable compensation from the organization (W-2/1099-MISC/1099-NEC)	(E) Reportable compensation from related organizations (W-2/1099-MISC/1099-NEC)	(F) Estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations
		Individual trustee or director	Institutional trustee	Officer	Key employee	Highest compensated employee	Former			
JeNyce Boolton	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Jeffrey Breslow	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Binta Brown	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Huan J Chang	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Carol Clavadetscher	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Jason Gatchell	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Derrick Gay	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Thomas Leopold	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Cynthia Mufarreh	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Joe Musselman	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Nishad Parmar	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Micheal Powers	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
Abiman Rajadurai	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	
David Schulz	1.00									
Trustee	0.00	✓					0	0	0	

Part VII Section A. Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees (continued)

(A) Name and title	(B) Average hours per week (list any hours for related organizations below dotted line)	(C) Position (do not check more than one box, unless person is both an officer and a director/trustee)						(D) Reportable compensation from the organization (W-2/1099-MISC/1099-NEC)	(E) Reportable compensation from related organizations (W-2/1099-MISC/1099-NEC)	(F) Estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations
		Individual trustee or director	Institutional trustee	Officer	Key employee	Highest compensated employee	Former			
Julie Stapel Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
Susie Sultan Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
David P Thomas Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
Jennifer Turner Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
Jennifer Vianello Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
John F Young Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
Anqi Zhang Trustee	1.00 0.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						0	0	0
1b Subtotal								685,147	0	23,119
c Total from continuation sheets to Part VII, Section A										
d Total (add lines 1b and 1c)								685,147	0	23,119

2 Total number of individuals (including but not limited to those listed above) who received more than \$100,000 of reportable compensation from the organization

	Yes	No
3 Did the organization list any former officer, director, trustee, key employee, or highest compensated employee on line 1a? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule J for such individual</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4 For any individual listed on line 1a, is the sum of reportable compensation and other compensation from the organization and related organizations greater than \$150,000? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule J for such individual</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5 Did any person listed on line 1a receive or accrue compensation from any unrelated organization or individual for services rendered to the organization? <i>If "Yes," complete Schedule J for such person</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Section B. Independent Contractors

1 Complete this table for your five highest compensated independent contractors that received more than \$100,000 of compensation from the organization. Report compensation for the calendar year ending with or within the organization's tax year.

(A) Name and business address	(B) Description of services	(C) Compensation
None		

2 Total number of independent contractors (including but not limited to those listed above) who received more than \$100,000 of compensation from the organization **0**

Part VIII Statement of Revenue

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part VIII

				(A) Total revenue	(B) Related or exempt function revenue	(C) Unrelated business revenue	(D) Revenue excluded from tax under sections 512-514	
Contributions, Gifts, Grants, and Other Similar Amounts	1a	Federated campaigns	1a 0					
	b	Membership dues	1b 0					
	c	Fundraising events	1c 1,178,659					
	d	Related organizations	1d 0					
	e	Government grants (contributions)	1e 71,000					
	f	All other contributions, gifts, grants, and similar amounts not included above	1f 8,058,637					
	g	Noncash contributions included in lines 1a-1f	1g \$ 0					
	h	Total. Add lines 1a-1f		9,308,296				
	Program Service Revenue				Business Code			
2a		-----						
b		-----						
c		-----						
d		-----						
e		-----						
f		All other program service revenue . .		2,822,223	2,822,223	0	0	
g	Total. Add lines 2a-2f		2,822,223					
Other Revenue	3	Investment income (including dividends, interest, and other similar amounts)		766,436	0	0	766,436	
	4	Income from investment of tax-exempt bond proceeds		0	0	0	0	
	5	Royalties		0	0	0	0	
	6a	Gross rents	(i) Real	192,119				
			(ii) Personal	0				
			6b	Less: rental expenses				
	6c	Rental income or (loss)	192,119	0				
	d	Net rental income or (loss)		192,119	192,119	0	0	
	7a	Gross amount from sales of assets other than inventory	(i) Securities	420,278				
			(ii) Other	0				
			7b	Less: cost or other basis and sales expenses				
	7c	Gain or (loss)	2,861,725	0				
	d	Net gain or (loss)		2,861,725	420,278	0	2,441,447	
	8a	Gross income from fundraising events (not including \$ 0 of contributions reported on line 1c). See Part IV, line 18	8a 0					
	b	Less: direct expenses	8b 0					
	c	Net income or (loss) from fundraising events		0		0	0	
	9a	Gross income from gaming activities. See Part IV, line 19	9a					
9b			Less: direct expenses					
c			Net income or (loss) from gaming activities					
10a	Gross sales of inventory, less returns and allowances	10a						
		10b	Less: cost of goods sold					
		c	Net income or (loss) from sales of inventory					
Miscellaneous Revenue				Business Code				
	11a	-----						
	b	-----						
	c	-----						
	d	All other revenue		7,329	7,329	0	0	
e	Total. Add lines 11a-11d		7,329					
12	Total revenue. See instructions			15,958,128	3,441,949	0	3,207,883	

Part IX Statement of Functional Expenses

Section 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations must complete all columns. All other organizations must complete column (A).

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part IX

Do not include amounts reported on lines 6b, 7b, 8b, 9b, and 10b of Part VIII.

	(A) Total expenses	(B) Program service expenses	(C) Management and general expenses	(D) Fundraising expenses
1 Grants and other assistance to domestic organizations and domestic governments. See Part IV, line 21	0	0		
2 Grants and other assistance to domestic individuals. See Part IV, line 22	820,545	820,545		
3 Grants and other assistance to foreign organizations, foreign governments, and foreign individuals. See Part IV, lines 15 and 16	0	0		
4 Benefits paid to or for members	0	0		
5 Compensation of current officers, directors, trustees, and key employees				
6 Compensation not included above to disqualified persons (as defined under section 4958(f)(1)) and persons described in section 4958(c)(3)(B)	0	0	0	0
7 Other salaries and wages	5,263,866	4,197,489	656,665	409,712
8 Pension plan accruals and contributions (include section 401(k) and 403(b) employer contributions)	107,241	0	107,241	0
9 Other employee benefits	543,940	725,136	-267,735	86,539
10 Payroll taxes	387,178	0	387,178	0
11 Fees for services (nonemployees):				
a Management	0	0	0	0
b Legal	27,959	25,622	2,337	0
c Accounting	23,100	0	23,100	0
d Lobbying	0	0	0	0
e Professional fundraising services. See Part IV, line 17	0			0
f Investment management fees	81,177	0	81,177	0
g Other. (If line 11g amount exceeds 10% of line 25, column (A), amount, list line 11g expenses on Schedule O.)	260,440	132,635	75,164	52,641
12 Advertising and promotion	87,009	63,575	22,690	744
13 Office expenses	92,639	18,495	66,500	7,644
14 Information technology	247,105	163,322	36,698	47,085
15 Royalties	0	0	0	0
16 Occupancy	299,698	270,698	23,239	5,761
17 Travel	109,724	100,017	8,671	1,036
18 Payments of travel or entertainment expenses for any federal, state, or local public officials	0	0	0	0
19 Conferences, conventions, and meetings	20,127	14,450	5,677	0
20 Interest	7,189	0	7,189	0
21 Payments to affiliates				
22 Depreciation, depletion, and amortization	342,886	314,502	20,250	8,134
23 Insurance	73,750	0	73,750	0
24 Other expenses. Itemize expenses not covered above. (List miscellaneous expenses on line 24e. If line 24e amount exceeds 10% of line 25, column (A), amount, list line 24e expenses on Schedule O.)				
a <u>Instrument purchases, maintenance and rentals</u>	194,780	194,780	0	0
b <u>Auditions and competitions</u>	26,595	26,595	0	0
c <u>Program supplies</u>	53,715	53,715	0	0
d <u>Student and concert recordings</u>	24,854	24,854	0	0
e All other expenses	75,446	105,452	-54,705	24,699
25 Total functional expenses. Add lines 1 through 24e	9,170,963	7,251,882	1,275,086	643,995
26 Joint costs. Complete this line only if the organization reported in column (B) joint costs from a combined educational campaign and fundraising solicitation. Check here <input type="checkbox"/> if following SOP 98-2 (ASC 958-720)				

Part X Balance Sheet

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part X

		(A)		(B)
		Beginning of year		End of year
Assets	1 Cash—non-interest-bearing	342,443	1	236,290
	2 Savings and temporary cash investments	4,730,112	2	5,029,788
	3 Pledges and grants receivable, net	3,228,348	3	4,949,558
	4 Accounts receivable, net	872,486	4	812,824
	5 Loans and other receivables from any current or former officer, director, trustee, key employee, creator or founder, substantial contributor, or 35% controlled entity or family member of any of these persons	0	5	0
	6 Loans and other receivables from other disqualified persons (as defined under section 4958(f)(1)), and persons described in section 4958(c)(3)(B)	0	6	0
	7 Notes and loans receivable, net	0	7	0
	8 Inventories for sale or use	15,043	8	13,435
	9 Prepaid expenses and deferred charges	103,082	9	66,097
	10a Land, buildings, and equipment: cost or other basis. Complete Part VI of Schedule D	10a 14,339,878		
	b Less: accumulated depreciation	10b 6,031,469	7,949,770	10c 8,308,409
	11 Investments—publicly traded securities	18,758,204	11	23,552,319
	12 Investments—other securities. See Part IV, line 11		12	
	13 Investments—program-related. See Part IV, line 11		13	
	14 Intangible assets		14	
	15 Other assets. See Part IV, line 11		15	
16 Total assets. Add lines 1 through 15 (must equal line 33)	35,999,488	16	42,968,720	
Liabilities	17 Accounts payable and accrued expenses	291,596	17	386,436
	18 Grants payable		18	
	19 Deferred revenue	954,330	19	1,041,867
	20 Tax-exempt bond liabilities		20	
	21 Escrow or custodial account liability. Complete Part IV of Schedule D		21	
	22 Loans and other payables to any current or former officer, director, trustee, key employee, creator or founder, substantial contributor, or 35% controlled entity or family member of any of these persons		22	
	23 Secured mortgages and notes payable to unrelated third parties		23	
	24 Unsecured notes and loans payable to unrelated third parties		24	
	25 Other liabilities (including federal income tax, payables to related third parties, and other liabilities not included on lines 17–24). Complete Part X of Schedule D	9,643	25	9,333
	26 Total liabilities. Add lines 17 through 25	1,255,569	26	1,437,636
Net Assets or Fund Balances	Organizations that follow FASB ASC 958, check here <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> and complete lines 27, 28, 32, and 33.			
	27 Net assets without donor restrictions	22,561,606	27	27,183,030
	28 Net assets with donor restrictions	12,182,313	28	14,348,054
	Organizations that do not follow FASB ASC 958, check here <input type="checkbox"/> and complete lines 29 through 33.			
	29 Capital stock or trust principal, or current funds		29	
	30 Paid-in or capital surplus, or land, building, or equipment fund		30	
	31 Retained earnings, endowment, accumulated income, or other funds		31	
	32 Total net assets or fund balances	34,743,919	32	41,531,084
33 Total liabilities and net assets/fund balances	35,999,488	33	42,968,720	

Part XI Reconciliation of Net Assets

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part XI

1	Total revenue (must equal Part VIII, column (A), line 12)	1	15,958,128
2	Total expenses (must equal Part IX, column (A), line 25)	2	9,170,963
3	Revenue less expenses. Subtract line 2 from line 1	3	6,787,165
4	Net assets or fund balances at beginning of year (must equal Part X, line 32, column (A))	4	34,743,919
5	Net unrealized gains (losses) on investments	5	0
6	Donated services and use of facilities	6	0
7	Investment expenses	7	0
8	Prior period adjustments	8	0
9	Other changes in net assets or fund balances (explain on Schedule O)	9	0
10	Net assets or fund balances at end of year. Combine lines 3 through 9 (must equal Part X, line 32, column (B))	10	41,531,084

Part XII Financial Statements and Reporting

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part XII

	Yes	No
1 Accounting method used to prepare the Form 990: <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accrual <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ If the organization changed its method of accounting from a prior year or checked "Other," explain on Schedule O.		
2a Were the organization's financial statements compiled or reviewed by an independent accountant? . . . If "Yes," check a box below to indicate whether the financial statements for the year were compiled or reviewed on a separate basis, consolidated basis, or both. <input type="checkbox"/> Separate basis <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated basis <input type="checkbox"/> Both consolidated and separate basis	✓	
b Were the organization's financial statements audited by an independent accountant? If "Yes," check a box below to indicate whether the financial statements for the year were audited on a separate basis, consolidated basis, or both. <input type="checkbox"/> Separate basis <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated basis <input type="checkbox"/> Both consolidated and separate basis	✓	
c If "Yes" to line 2a or 2b, does the organization have a committee that assumes responsibility for oversight of the audit, review, or compilation of its financial statements and selection of an independent accountant? . . . If the organization changed either its oversight process or selection process during the tax year, explain on Schedule O.	✓	
3a As a result of a federal award, was the organization required to undergo an audit or audits as set forth in the Uniform Guidance, 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart F?		✓
b If "Yes," did the organization undergo the required audit or audits? If the organization did not undergo the required audit or audits, explain why on Schedule O and describe any steps taken to undergo such audits .		

**SCHEDULE A
(Form 990)**

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Public Charity Status and Public Support

Complete if the organization is a section 501(c)(3) organization or a section 4947(a)(1) nonexempt charitable trust.
Attach to Form 990 or Form 990-EZ.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

**Open to Public
Inspection**

Name of the organization MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC	Employer identification number 36-3028768
--	---

Part I Reason for Public Charity Status. (All organizations must complete this part.) See instructions.

The organization is not a private foundation because it is: (For lines 1 through 12, check only one box.)

- 1 A church, convention of churches, or association of churches described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(i)**.
- 2 A school described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii)**. (Attach Schedule E (Form 990).)
- 3 A hospital or a cooperative hospital service organization described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(iii)**.
- 4 A medical research organization operated in conjunction with a hospital described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(iii)**. Enter the hospital's name, city, and state:
- 5 An organization operated for the benefit of a college or university owned or operated by a governmental unit described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(iv)**. (Complete Part II.)
- 6 A federal, state, or local government or governmental unit described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(v)**.
- 7 An organization that normally receives a substantial part of its support from a governmental unit or from the general public described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)**. (Complete Part II.)
- 8 A community trust described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)**. (Complete Part II.)
- 9 An agricultural research organization described in **section 170(b)(1)(A)(ix)** operated in conjunction with a land-grant college or university or a non-land-grant college of agriculture (see instructions). Enter the name, city, and state of the college or university:
- 10 An organization that normally receives (1) more than 33¹/₃% of its support from contributions, membership fees, and gross receipts from activities related to its exempt functions, subject to certain exceptions; and (2) no more than 33¹/₃% of its support from gross investment income and unrelated business taxable income (less section 511 tax) from businesses acquired by the organization after June 30, 1975. See **section 509(a)(2)**. (Complete Part III.)
- 11 An organization organized and operated exclusively to test for public safety. See **section 509(a)(4)**.
- 12 An organization organized and operated exclusively for the benefit of, to perform the functions of, or to carry out the purposes of one or more publicly supported organizations described in **section 509(a)(1)** or **section 509(a)(2)**. See **section 509(a)(3)**. Check the box on lines 12a through 12d that describes the type of supporting organization and complete lines 12e, 12f, and 12g.
 - a **Type I.** A supporting organization operated, supervised, or controlled by its supported organization(s), typically by giving the supported organization(s) the power to regularly appoint or elect a majority of the directors or trustees of the supporting organization. **You must complete Part IV, Sections A and B.**
 - b **Type II.** A supporting organization supervised or controlled in connection with its supported organization(s), by having control or management of the supporting organization vested in the same persons that control or manage the supported organization(s). **You must complete Part IV, Sections A and C.**
 - c **Type III functionally integrated.** A supporting organization operated in connection with, and functionally integrated with, its supported organization(s) (see instructions). **You must complete Part IV, Sections A, D, and E.**
 - d **Type III non-functionally integrated.** A supporting organization operated in connection with its supported organization(s) that is not functionally integrated. The organization generally must satisfy a distribution requirement and an attentiveness requirement (see instructions). **You must complete Part IV, Sections A and D, and Part V.**
 - e Check this box if the organization received a written determination from the IRS that it is a Type I, Type II, Type III functionally integrated, or Type III non-functionally integrated supporting organization.
- f Enter the number of supported organizations
- g Provide the following information about the supported organization(s).

(i) Name of supported organization	(ii) EIN	(iii) Type of organization (described on lines 1-10 above (see instructions))	(iv) Is the organization listed in your governing document?		(v) Amount of monetary support (see instructions)	(vi) Amount of other support (see instructions)
			Yes	No		
(A)						
(B)						
(C)						
(D)						
(E)						
Total						

Part II Support Schedule for Organizations Described in Sections 170(b)(1)(A)(iv) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi)

(Complete only if you checked the box on line 5, 7, or 8 of Part I or if the organization failed to qualify under Part III. If the organization fails to qualify under the tests listed below, please complete Part III.)

Section A. Public Support

Calendar year (or fiscal year beginning in)	(a) 2019	(b) 2020	(c) 2021	(d) 2022	(e) 2023	(f) Total
1 Gifts, grants, contributions, and membership fees received. (Do not include any "unusual grants.")	3,866,228	4,323,364	6,110,515	7,414,559	9,306,688	31,021,354
2 Tax revenues levied for the organization's benefit and either paid to or expended on its behalf	0	0	0	0	0	0
3 The value of services or facilities furnished by a governmental unit to the organization without charge	0	0	0	0	0	0
4 Total. Add lines 1 through 3	3,866,228	4,323,364	6,110,515	7,414,559	9,306,688	31,021,354
5 The portion of total contributions by each person (other than a governmental unit or publicly supported organization) included on line 1 that exceeds 2% of the amount shown on line 11, column (f)						
6 Public support. Subtract line 5 from line 4						31,021,354

Section B. Total Support

Calendar year (or fiscal year beginning in)	(a) 2019	(b) 2020	(c) 2021	(d) 2022	(e) 2023	(f) Total
7 Amounts from line 4	3,866,228	4,323,364	6,110,515	7,414,559	9,306,688	31,021,354
8 Gross income from interest, dividends, payments received on securities loans, rents, royalties, and income from similar sources	1,114,143	3,488,315	-2,584,007	1,512,183	3,557,628	7,088,262
9 Net income from unrelated business activities, whether or not the business is regularly carried on	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Other income. Do not include gain or loss from the sale of capital assets (Explain in Part VI.)	9,769	0	2,267	13,881	8,937	34,854
11 Total support. Add lines 7 through 10						38,144,470
12 Gross receipts from related activities, etc. (see instructions)					12	
13 First 5 years. If the Form 990 is for the organization's first, second, third, fourth, or fifth tax year as a section 501(c)(3) organization, check this box and stop here						<input type="checkbox"/>

Section C. Computation of Public Support Percentage

14 Public support percentage for 2023 (line 6, column (f), divided by line 11, column (f))	14	81.33 %
15 Public support percentage from 2022 Schedule A, Part II, line 14	15	84.69 %
16a 33 1/3% support test—2023. If the organization did not check the box on line 13, and line 14 is 33 1/3% or more, check this box and stop here . The organization qualifies as a publicly supported organization		<input type="checkbox"/>
b 33 1/3% support test—2022. If the organization did not check a box on line 13 or 16a, and line 15 is 33 1/3% or more, check this box and stop here . The organization qualifies as a publicly supported organization		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17a 10%-facts-and-circumstances test—2023. If the organization did not check a box on line 13, 16a, or 16b, and line 14 is 10% or more, and if the organization meets the facts-and-circumstances test, check this box and stop here . Explain in Part VI how the organization meets the facts-and-circumstances test. The organization qualifies as a publicly supported organization		<input type="checkbox"/>
b 10%-facts-and-circumstances test—2022. If the organization did not check a box on line 13, 16a, 16b, or 17a, and line 15 is 10% or more, and if the organization meets the facts-and-circumstances test, check this box and stop here . Explain in Part VI how the organization meets the facts-and-circumstances test. The organization qualifies as a publicly supported organization		<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Private foundation. If the organization did not check a box on line 13, 16a, 16b, 17a, or 17b, check this box and see instructions		<input type="checkbox"/>

Part III Support Schedule for Organizations Described in Section 509(a)(2)

(Complete only if you checked the box on line 10 of Part I or if the organization failed to qualify under Part II. If the organization fails to qualify under the tests listed below, please complete Part II.)

Section A. Public Support

Calendar year (or fiscal year beginning in)	(a) 2019	(b) 2020	(c) 2021	(d) 2022	(e) 2023	(f) Total
1 Gifts, grants, contributions, and membership fees received. (Do not include any "unusual grants.")						
2 Gross receipts from admissions, merchandise sold or services performed, or facilities furnished in any activity that is related to the organization's tax-exempt purpose						
3 Gross receipts from activities that are not an unrelated trade or business under section 513						
4 Tax revenues levied for the organization's benefit and either paid to or expended on its behalf						
5 The value of services or facilities furnished by a governmental unit to the organization without charge						
6 Total. Add lines 1 through 5						
7a Amounts included on lines 1, 2, and 3 received from disqualified persons						
b Amounts included on lines 2 and 3 received from other than disqualified persons that exceed the greater of \$5,000 or 1% of the amount on line 13 for the year						
c Add lines 7a and 7b						
8 Public support. (Subtract line 7c from line 6.)						

Section B. Total Support

Calendar year (or fiscal year beginning in)	(a) 2019	(b) 2020	(c) 2021	(d) 2022	(e) 2023	(f) Total
9 Amounts from line 6						
10a Gross income from interest, dividends, payments received on securities loans, rents, royalties, and income from similar sources						
b Unrelated business taxable income (less section 511 taxes) from businesses acquired after June 30, 1975						
c Add lines 10a and 10b						
11 Net income from unrelated business activities not included on line 10b, whether or not the business is regularly carried on						
12 Other income. Do not include gain or loss from the sale of capital assets (Explain in Part VI.)						
13 Total support. (Add lines 9, 10c, 11, and 12.)						
14 First 5 years. If the Form 990 is for the organization's first, second, third, fourth, or fifth tax year as a section 501(c)(3) organization, check this box and stop here <input type="checkbox"/>						

Section C. Computation of Public Support Percentage

15 Public support percentage for 2023 (line 8, column (f), divided by line 13, column (f))	15	%
16 Public support percentage from 2022 Schedule A, Part III, line 15	16	%

Section D. Computation of Investment Income Percentage

17 Investment income percentage for 2023 (line 10c, column (f), divided by line 13, column (f))	17	%
18 Investment income percentage from 2022 Schedule A, Part III, line 17	18	%

- 19a 33 1/3% support tests—2023.** If the organization did not check the box on line 14, and line 15 is more than 33 1/3%, and line 17 is not more than 33 1/3%, check this box and **stop here**. The organization qualifies as a publicly supported organization . . .
- b 33 1/3% support tests—2022.** If the organization did not check a box on line 14 or line 19a, and line 16 is more than 33 1/3%, and line 18 is not more than 33 1/3%, check this box and **stop here**. The organization qualifies as a publicly supported organization . . .
- 20 Private foundation.** If the organization did not check a box on line 14, 19a, or 19b, check this box and see instructions . . .

Part IV Supporting Organizations

(Complete only if you checked a box on line 12 of Part I. If you checked box 12a, Part I, complete Sections A and B. If you checked box 12b, Part I, complete Sections A and C. If you checked box 12c, Part I, complete Sections A, D, and E. If you checked box 12d, Part I, complete Sections A and D, and complete Part V.)

Section A. All Supporting Organizations

		Yes	No
1	Are all of the organization's supported organizations listed by name in the organization's governing documents? <i>If "No," describe in Part VI how the supported organizations are designated. If designated by class or purpose, describe the designation. If historic and continuing relationship, explain.</i>		
2	Did the organization have any supported organization that does not have an IRS determination of status under section 509(a)(1) or (2)? <i>If "Yes," explain in Part VI how the organization determined that the supported organization was described in section 509(a)(1) or (2).</i>		
3a	Did the organization have a supported organization described in section 501(c)(4), (5), or (6)? <i>If "Yes," answer lines 3b and 3c below.</i>		
3b	Did the organization confirm that each supported organization qualified under section 501(c)(4), (5), or (6) and satisfied the public support tests under section 509(a)(2)? <i>If "Yes," describe in Part VI when and how the organization made the determination.</i>		
3c	Did the organization ensure that all support to such organizations was used exclusively for section 170(c)(2)(B) purposes? <i>If "Yes," explain in Part VI what controls the organization put in place to ensure such use.</i>		
4a	Was any supported organization not organized in the United States ("foreign supported organization")? <i>If "Yes," and if you checked box 12a or 12b in Part I, answer lines 4b and 4c below.</i>		
4b	Did the organization have ultimate control and discretion in deciding whether to make grants to the foreign supported organization? <i>If "Yes," describe in Part VI how the organization had such control and discretion despite being controlled or supervised by or in connection with its supported organizations.</i>		
4c	Did the organization support any foreign supported organization that does not have an IRS determination under sections 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1) or (2)? <i>If "Yes," explain in Part VI what controls the organization used to ensure that all support to the foreign supported organization was used exclusively for section 170(c)(2)(B) purposes.</i>		
5a	Did the organization add, substitute, or remove any supported organizations during the tax year? <i>If "Yes," answer lines 5b and 5c below (if applicable). Also, provide detail in Part VI, including (i) the names and EIN numbers of the supported organizations added, substituted, or removed; (ii) the reasons for each such action; (iii) the authority under the organization's organizing document authorizing such action; and (iv) how the action was accomplished (such as by amendment to the organizing document).</i>		
5b	Type I or Type II only. Was any added or substituted supported organization part of a class already designated in the organization's organizing document?		
5c	Substitutions only. Was the substitution the result of an event beyond the organization's control?		
6	Did the organization provide support (whether in the form of grants or the provision of services or facilities) to anyone other than (i) its supported organizations, (ii) individuals that are part of the charitable class benefited by one or more of its supported organizations, or (iii) other supporting organizations that also support or benefit one or more of the filing organization's supported organizations? <i>If "Yes," provide detail in Part VI.</i>		
7	Did the organization provide a grant, loan, compensation, or other similar payment to a substantial contributor (as defined in section 4958(c)(3)(C)), a family member of a substantial contributor, or a 35% controlled entity with regard to a substantial contributor? <i>If "Yes," complete Part I of Schedule L (Form 990).</i>		
8	Did the organization make a loan to a disqualified person (as defined in section 4958) not described on line 7? <i>If "Yes," complete Part I of Schedule L (Form 990).</i>		
9a	Was the organization controlled directly or indirectly at any time during the tax year by one or more disqualified persons, as defined in section 4946 (other than foundation managers and organizations described in section 509(a)(1) or (2))? <i>If "Yes," provide detail in Part VI.</i>		
9b	Did one or more disqualified persons (as defined on line 9a) hold a controlling interest in any entity in which the supporting organization had an interest? <i>If "Yes," provide detail in Part VI.</i>		
9c	Did a disqualified person (as defined on line 9a) have an ownership interest in, or derive any personal benefit from, assets in which the supporting organization also had an interest? <i>If "Yes," provide detail in Part VI.</i>		
10a	Was the organization subject to the excess business holdings rules of section 4943 because of section 4943(f) (regarding certain Type II supporting organizations, and all Type III non-functionally integrated supporting organizations)? <i>If "Yes," answer line 10b below.</i>		
10b	Did the organization have any excess business holdings in the tax year? <i>(Use Schedule C, Form 4720, to determine whether the organization had excess business holdings.)</i>		

Part IV Supporting Organizations (continued)

		Yes	No
11	Has the organization accepted a gift or contribution from any of the following persons?		
a	A person who directly or indirectly controls, either alone or together with persons described on lines 11b and 11c below, the governing body of a supported organization?		
	11a		
b	A family member of a person described on line 11a above?		
	11b		
c	A 35% controlled entity of a person described on line 11a or 11b above? If "Yes" to line 11a, 11b, or 11c, provide detail in Part VI .		
	11c		

Section B. Type I Supporting Organizations

		Yes	No
1	Did the governing body, members of the governing body, officers acting in their official capacity, or membership of one or more supported organizations have the power to regularly appoint or elect at least a majority of the organization's officers, directors, or trustees at all times during the tax year? If "No," describe in Part VI how the supported organization(s) effectively operated, supervised, or controlled the organization's activities. If the organization had more than one supported organization, describe how the powers to appoint and/or remove officers, directors, or trustees were allocated among the supported organizations and what conditions or restrictions, if any, applied to such powers during the tax year.		
	1		
2	Did the organization operate for the benefit of any supported organization other than the supported organization(s) that operated, supervised, or controlled the supporting organization? If "Yes," explain in Part VI how providing such benefit carried out the purposes of the supported organization(s) that operated, supervised, or controlled the supporting organization.		
	2		

Section C. Type II Supporting Organizations

		Yes	No
1	Were a majority of the organization's directors or trustees during the tax year also a majority of the directors or trustees of each of the organization's supported organization(s)? If "No," describe in Part VI how control or management of the supporting organization was vested in the same persons that controlled or managed the supported organization(s).		
	1		

Section D. All Type III Supporting Organizations

		Yes	No
1	Did the organization provide to each of its supported organizations, by the last day of the fifth month of the organization's tax year, (i) a written notice describing the type and amount of support provided during the prior tax year, (ii) a copy of the Form 990 that was most recently filed as of the date of notification, and (iii) copies of the organization's governing documents in effect on the date of notification, to the extent not previously provided?		
	1		
2	Were any of the organization's officers, directors, or trustees either (i) appointed or elected by the supported organization(s), or (ii) serving on the governing body of a supported organization? If "No," explain in Part VI how the organization maintained a close and continuous working relationship with the supported organization(s).		
	2		
3	By reason of the relationship described on line 2, above, did the organization's supported organizations have a significant voice in the organization's investment policies and in directing the use of the organization's income or assets at all times during the tax year? If "Yes," describe in Part VI the role the organization's supported organizations played in this regard.		
	3		

Section E. Type III Functionally Integrated Supporting Organizations

1	Check the box next to the method that the organization used to satisfy the Integral Part Test during the year (see instructions).		
a	<input type="checkbox"/> The organization satisfied the Activities Test. Complete line 2 below.		
b	<input type="checkbox"/> The organization is the parent of each of its supported organizations. Complete line 3 below.		
c	<input type="checkbox"/> The organization supported a governmental entity. Describe in Part VI how you supported a governmental entity (see instructions).		
2	Activities Test. Answer lines 2a and 2b below.		
a	Did substantially all of the organization's activities during the tax year directly further the exempt purposes of the supported organization(s) to which the organization was responsive? If "Yes," then in Part VI identify those supported organizations and explain how these activities directly furthered their exempt purposes, how the organization was responsive to those supported organizations, and how the organization determined that these activities constituted substantially all of its activities.		
	2a		
b	Did the activities described on line 2a, above, constitute activities that, but for the organization's involvement, one or more of the organization's supported organization(s) would have been engaged in? If "Yes," explain in Part VI the reasons for the organization's position that its supported organization(s) would have engaged in these activities but for the organization's involvement.		
	2b		
3	Parent of Supported Organizations. Answer lines 3a and 3b below.		
a	Did the organization have the power to regularly appoint or elect a majority of the officers, directors, or trustees of each of the supported organizations? If "Yes" or "No," provide details in Part VI .		
	3a		
b	Did the organization exercise a substantial degree of direction over the policies, programs, and activities of each of its supported organizations? If "Yes," describe in Part VI the role played by the organization in this regard.		
	3b		

Part V Type III Non-Functionally Integrated 509(a)(3) Supporting Organizations

- 1** Check here if the organization satisfied the Integral Part Test as a qualifying trust on Nov. 20, 1970 (*explain in Part VI*). **See instructions.** All other Type III non-functionally integrated supporting organizations must complete Sections A through E.

Section A—Adjusted Net Income		(A) Prior Year	(B) Current Year (optional)
1	Net short-term capital gain	1	
2	Recoveries of prior-year distributions	2	
3	Other gross income (see instructions)	3	
4	Add lines 1 through 3.	4	
5	Depreciation and depletion	5	
6	Portion of operating expenses paid or incurred for production or collection of gross income or for management, conservation, or maintenance of property held for production of income (see instructions)	6	
7	Other expenses (see instructions)	7	
8	Adjusted Net Income (subtract lines 5, 6, and 7 from line 4)	8	
Section B—Minimum Asset Amount		(A) Prior Year	(B) Current Year (optional)
1	Aggregate fair market value of all non-exempt-use assets (see instructions for short tax year or assets held for part of year):		
a	Average monthly value of securities	1a	
b	Average monthly cash balances	1b	
c	Fair market value of other non-exempt-use assets	1c	
d	Total (add lines 1a, 1b, and 1c)	1d	
e	Discount claimed for blockage or other factors (<i>explain in detail in Part VI</i>):		
2	Acquisition indebtedness applicable to non-exempt-use assets	2	
3	Subtract line 2 from line 1d.	3	
4	Cash deemed held for exempt use. Enter 0.015 of line 3 (for greater amount, see instructions).	4	
5	Net value of non-exempt-use assets (subtract line 4 from line 3)	5	
6	Multiply line 5 by 0.035.	6	
7	Recoveries of prior-year distributions	7	
8	Minimum Asset Amount (add line 7 to line 6)	8	
Section C—Distributable Amount			Current Year
1	Adjusted net income for prior year (from Section A, line 8, column A)	1	
2	Enter 0.85 of line 1.	2	
3	Minimum asset amount for prior year (from Section B, line 8, column A)	3	
4	Enter greater of line 2 or line 3.	4	
5	Income tax imposed in prior year	5	
6	Distributable Amount. Subtract line 5 from line 4, unless subject to emergency temporary reduction (see instructions).	6	
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if the current year is the organization's first as a non-functionally integrated Type III supporting organization (see instructions).		

Part V Type III Non-Functionally Integrated 509(a)(3) Supporting Organizations (continued)

Section D—Distributions		Current Year
1	Amounts paid to supported organizations to accomplish exempt purposes	1
2	Amounts paid to perform activity that directly furthers exempt purposes of supported organizations, in excess of income from activity	2
3	Administrative expenses paid to accomplish exempt purposes of supported organizations	3
4	Amounts paid to acquire exempt-use assets	4
5	Qualified set-aside amounts (prior IRS approval required—provide details in Part VI)	5
6	Other distributions (describe in Part VI). See instructions.	6
7	Total annual distributions. Add lines 1 through 6.	7
8	Distributions to attentive supported organizations to which the organization is responsive (provide details in Part VI). See instructions.	8
9	Distributable amount for 2023 from Section C, line 6	9
10	Line 8 amount divided by line 9 amount	10

Section E—Distribution Allocations (see instructions)	(i) Excess Distributions	(ii) Underdistributions Pre-2023	(iii) Distributable Amount for 2023
1 Distributable amount for 2023 from Section C, line 6			
2 Underdistributions, if any, for years prior to 2023 (reasonable cause required—explain in Part VI). See instructions.			
3 Excess distributions carryover, if any, to 2023			
a From 2018			
b From 2019			
c From 2020			
d From 2021			
e From 2022			
f Total of lines 3a through 3e			
g Applied to underdistributions of prior years			
h Applied to 2023 distributable amount			
i Carryover from 2018 not applied (see instructions)			
j Remainder. Subtract lines 3g, 3h, and 3i from line 3f.			
4 Distributions for 2023 from Section D, line 7: \$			
a Applied to underdistributions of prior years			
b Applied to 2023 distributable amount			
c Remainder. Subtract lines 4a and 4b from line 4.			
5 Remaining underdistributions for years prior to 2023, if any. Subtract lines 3g and 4a from line 2. For result greater than zero, explain in Part VI . See instructions.			
6 Remaining underdistributions for 2023. Subtract lines 3h and 4b from line 1. For result greater than zero, explain in Part VI . See instructions.			
7 Excess distributions carryover to 2024. Add lines 3j and 4c.			
8 Breakdown of line 7:			
a Excess from 2019 . . .			
b Excess from 2020 . . .			
c Excess from 2021 . . .			
d Excess from 2022 . . .			
e Excess from 2023 . . .			

SCHEDULE D (Form 990)

Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

Supplemental Financial Statements

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f, 12a, or 12b. Attach to Form 990.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

Open to Public Inspection

Name of the organization: MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC; Employer identification number: 36-3028768

Part I Organizations Maintaining Donor Advised Funds or Other Similar Funds or Accounts

Table with 2 columns: (a) Donor advised funds, (b) Funds and other accounts. Rows 1-4 for total number and aggregate values. Rows 5-6 for donor advisement questions.

Part II Conservation Easements

Table with 2 columns: Held at the End of the Tax Year. Rows 1-9 for conservation easement details, including purpose, acreage, and monitoring expenses.

Part III Organizations Maintaining Collections of Art, Historical Treasures, or Other Similar Assets

Table with 2 columns: Revenue and Assets. Rows 1a-2 for reporting requirements on art and historical treasures.

Part III Organizations Maintaining Collections of Art, Historical Treasures, or Other Similar Assets *(continued)*

3 Using the organization's acquisition, accession, and other records, check any of the following that make significant use of its collection items (check all that apply).

- a** Public exhibition
- b** Scholarly research
- c** Preservation for future generations
- d** Loan or exchange program
- e** Other _____

4 Provide a description of the organization's collections and explain how they further the organization's exempt purpose in Part XIII.

5 During the year, did the organization solicit or receive donations of art, historical treasures, or other similar assets to be sold to raise funds rather than to be maintained as part of the organization's collection? **Yes** **No**

Part IV Escrow and Custodial Arrangements

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 9, or reported an amount on Form 990, Part X, line 21.

1a Is the organization an agent, trustee, custodian, or other intermediary for contributions or other assets not included on Form 990, Part X? **Yes** **No**

b If "Yes," explain the arrangement in Part XIII and complete the following table.

	Amount
1c Beginning balance	
1d Additions during the year	
1e Distributions during the year	
1f Ending balance	

2a Did the organization include an amount on Form 990, Part X, line 21, for escrow or custodial account liability? **Yes** **No**

b If "Yes," explain the arrangement in Part XIII. Check here if the explanation has been provided in Part XIII

Part V Endowment Funds

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 10.

	(a) Current year	(b) Prior year	(c) Two years back	(d) Three years back	(e) Four years back
1a Beginning of year balance	24,282,073	17,833,515	20,634,219	17,553,551	16,002,766
b Contributions	3,947,955	5,850,440	220,000	275,018	111,317
c Net investment earnings, gains, and losses	3,302,826	1,379,148	-2,260,678	3,527,529	2,178,566
d Grants or scholarships	584,730	521,640	483,558	457,322	486,288
e Other expenditures for facilities and programs	763,800	223,560	206,443	202,178	250,512
f Administrative expenses	65,293	35,830	70,025	62,379	2,298
g End of year balance	30,119,031	24,282,073	17,833,515	20,634,219	17,553,551

2 Provide the estimated percentage of the current year end balance (line 1g, column (a)) held as:

- a** Board designated or quasi-endowment 71 %
- b** Permanent endowment 29 %
- c** Term endowment 0 %

The percentages on lines 2a, 2b, and 2c should equal 100%.

3a Are there endowment funds not in the possession of the organization that are held and administered for the organization by:

	Yes	No
(i) Unrelated organizations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Related organizations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b If "Yes" on line 3a(ii), are the related organizations listed as required on Schedule R?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 Describe in Part XIII the intended uses of the organization's endowment funds.

Part VI Land, Buildings, and Equipment

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 11a. See Form 990, Part X, line 10.

Description of property	(a) Cost or other basis (investment)	(b) Cost or other basis (other)	(c) Accumulated depreciation	(d) Book value
1a Land	4,450,000	0	0	4,450,000
b Buildings	6,401,783	0	2,981,400	3,420,383
c Leasehold improvements	493,142	0	492,049	1,093
d Equipment	2,982,953	0	2,558,020	424,933
e Other	12,000	0	0	12,000
Total. Add lines 1a through 1e. (Column (d) must equal Form 990, Part X, line 10c, column (B))				8,308,409

Part VII Investments—Other Securities

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 11b. See Form 990, Part X, line 12.

(a) Description of security or category (including name of security)	(b) Book value	(c) Method of valuation: Cost or end-of-year market value
(1) Financial derivatives		
(2) Closely held equity interests		
(3) Other _____		
(A) _____		
(B) _____		
(C) _____		
(D) _____		
(E) _____		
(F) _____		
(G) _____		
(H) _____		
Total. (Column (b) must equal Form 990, Part X, line 12, col. (B))		

Part VIII Investments—Program Related

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 11c. See Form 990, Part X, line 13.

(a) Description of investment	(b) Book value	(c) Method of valuation: Cost or end-of-year market value
(1)		
(2)		
(3)		
(4)		
(5)		
(6)		
(7)		
(8)		
(9)		
Total. (Column (b) must equal Form 990, Part X, line 13, col. (B))		

Part IX Other Assets

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 11d. See Form 990, Part X, line 15.

(a) Description	(b) Book value
(1)	
(2)	
(3)	
(4)	
(5)	
(6)	
(7)	
(8)	
(9)	
Total. (Column (b) must equal Form 990, Part X, line 15, col. (B))	

Part X Other Liabilities

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 11e or 11f. See Form 990, Part X, line 25.

1. (a) Description of liability	(b) Book value
(1) Federal income taxes	0
(2) Interfund balances due	9,333
(3)	
(4)	
(5)	
(6)	
(7)	
(8)	
(9)	
Total. (Column (b) must equal Form 990, Part X, line 25, col. (B))	9,333

2. Liability for uncertain tax positions. In Part XIII, provide the text of the footnote to the organization's financial statements that reports the organization's liability for uncertain tax positions under FASB ASC 740. Check here if the text of the footnote has been provided in Part XIII .

Part XI Reconciliation of Revenue per Audited Financial Statements With Revenue per Return

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 12a.

1	Total revenue, gains, and other support per audited financial statements		1	15,260,712
2	Amounts included on line 1 but not on Form 990, Part VIII, line 12:			
a	Net unrealized gains (losses) on investments	2a	0	
b	Donated services and use of facilities	2b	0	
c	Recoveries of prior year grants	2c	0	
d	Other (Describe in Part XIII.)	2d	-626,883	
e	Add lines 2a through 2d			2e -626,883
3	Subtract line 2e from line 1			3 15,887,595
4	Amounts included on Form 990, Part VIII, line 12, but not on line 1:			
a	Investment expenses not included on Form 990, Part VIII, line 7b	4a	70,533	
b	Other (Describe in Part XIII.)	4b	0	
c	Add lines 4a and 4b			4c 70,533
5	Total revenue. Add lines 3 and 4c . (This must equal Form 990, Part I, line 12.)			5 15,958,128

Part XII Reconciliation of Expenses per Audited Financial Statements With Expenses per Return

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 12a.

1	Total expenses and losses per audited financial statements		1	8,473,547
2	Amounts included on line 1 but not on Form 990, Part IX, line 25:			
a	Donated services and use of facilities	2a	0	
b	Prior year adjustments	2b	0	
c	Other losses	2c	0	
d	Other (Describe in Part XIII.)	2d	-626,883	
e	Add lines 2a through 2d			2e -626,883
3	Subtract line 2e from line 1			3 9,100,430
4	Amounts included on Form 990, Part IX, line 25, but not on line 1:			
a	Investment expenses not included on Form 990, Part VIII, line 7b	4a	70,533	
b	Other (Describe in Part XIII.)	4b	0	
c	Add lines 4a and 4b			4c 70,533
5	Total expenses. Add lines 3 and 4c . (This must equal Form 990, Part I, line 18.)			5 9,170,963

Part XIII Supplemental Information

Provide the descriptions required for Part II, lines 3, 5, and 9; Part III, lines 1a and 4; Part IV, lines 1b and 2b; Part V, line 4; Part X, line 2; Part XI, lines 2d and 4b; and Part XII, lines 2d and 4b. Also complete this part to provide any additional information.

Schedule D, Part V, Line 4 - The endowment is primarily used to provide financial aid to our students and support general operations.

Schedule D, Part X, Line 2 - Merit is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) and applicable state law, except for net income derived from unrelated business activities. In addition, Merit qualifies for charitable contribution deduction under Section 170(b)(1)(A) and has been classified as an organization other than a private foundation under IRC Section 509(a). Merit's income tax filings are subject to audit by various taxing authorities. In evaluating Merit's activities, management believes its position of tax-exempt status is based on current facts and circumstances, and there have been no uncertain positions taken related to recording income taxes. In the option of management, there are no activities unrelated to the purpose of the organization and, therefore, no tax is to be recognized. It is the policy of Merit to include in administration expenses penalties and interest assessed by income taxing authorities.

Schedule D, Part XI, Line 2d - Financial Aid is a contra-revenue item and reduces revenues on the audited financial statement. They are included as expenses in the Form 990 filing

Schedule D, Part XII, Line 2d - Financial Aid is a contra-revenue item and reduces revenues on the audited financial statement. They are included as expenses in the Form 990 filing

**SCHEDULE G
(Form 990)**

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Supplemental Information Regarding Fundraising or Gaming Activities

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 17, 18, or 19, or if the organization entered more than \$15,000 on Form 990-EZ, line 6a.

Attach to Form 990 or Form 990-EZ.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

Open to Public Inspection

Name of the organization

MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Employer identification number

36-3028768

Part I Fundraising Activities. Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 17. Form 990-EZ filers are not required to complete this part.

- 1** Indicate whether the organization raised funds through any of the following activities. Check all that apply.
- a** Mail solicitations
 - b** Internet and email solicitations
 - c** Phone solicitations
 - d** In-person solicitations
 - e** Solicitation of non-government grants
 - f** Solicitation of government grants
 - g** Special fundraising events
- 2a** Did the organization have a written or oral agreement with any individual (including officers, directors, trustees, or key employees listed in Form 990, Part VII) or entity in connection with professional fundraising services? **Yes** **No**
- b** If "Yes," list the 10 highest paid individuals or entities (fundraisers) pursuant to agreements under which the fundraiser is to be compensated at least \$5,000 by the organization.

(i) Name and address of individual or entity (fundraiser)	(ii) Activity	(iii) Did fundraiser have custody or control of contributions?		(iv) Gross receipts from activity	(v) Amount paid to (or retained by) fundraiser listed in col. (i)	(vi) Amount paid to (or retained by) organization
		Yes	No			
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
Total						

- 3** List all states in which the organization is registered or licensed to solicit contributions or has been notified it is exempt from registration or licensing.

Part II Fundraising Events. Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 18, or reported more than \$15,000 of fundraising event contributions and gross income on Form 990-EZ, lines 1 and 6b. List events with gross receipts greater than \$5,000.

		(a) Event #1	(b) Event #2	(c) Other events	(d) Total events (add col. (a) through col. (c))
		Annual Gala (event type)	(event type)	(total number)	
Revenue	1 Gross receipts	1,340,973			1,340,973
	2 Less: Contributions	0			0
	3 Gross income (line 1 minus line 2)	1,340,973			1,340,973
Direct Expenses	4 Cash prizes	0			0
	5 Noncash prizes	0			0
	6 Rent/facility costs	0			0
	7 Food and beverages	0		0	0
	8 Entertainment	0		0	0
	9 Other direct expenses	0			0
	10 Direct expense summary. Add lines 4 through 9 in column (d)				0
11 Net income summary. Subtract line 10 from line 3, column (d)				1,340,973	

Part III Gaming. Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 19, or reported more than \$15,000 on Form 990-EZ, line 6a.

		(a) Bingo	(b) Pull tabs/instant bingo/progressive bingo	(c) Other gaming	(d) Total gaming (add col. (a) through col. (c))
		1 Gross revenue			
Direct Expenses	2 Cash prizes				
	3 Noncash prizes				
	4 Rent/facility costs				
	5 Other direct expenses				
6 Volunteer labor	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes _____ % <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes _____ % <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes _____ % <input type="checkbox"/> No		
7 Direct expense summary. Add lines 2 through 5 in column (d)					
8 Net gaming income summary. Subtract line 7 from line 1, column (d)					

9 Enter the state(s) in which the organization conducts gaming activities: _____

a Is the organization licensed to conduct gaming activities in each of these states? Yes No

b If "No," explain: _____

10a Were any of the organization's gaming licenses revoked, suspended, or terminated during the tax year? Yes No

b If "Yes," explain: _____

- 11** Does the organization conduct gaming activities with nonmembers? **Yes** **No**
- 12** Is the organization a grantor, beneficiary or trustee of a trust, or a member of a partnership or other entity formed to administer charitable gaming? **Yes** **No**
- 13** Indicate the percentage of gaming activity conducted in:

a The organization's facility	13a	%
b An outside facility	13b	%

14 Enter the name and address of the person who prepares the organization's gaming/special events books and records:

Name _____

Address _____

- 15a** Does the organization have a contract with a third party from whom the organization receives gaming revenue? **Yes** **No**
- b** If "Yes," enter the amount of gaming revenue received by the organization \$ _____ and the amount of gaming revenue retained by the third party \$ _____
- c** If "Yes," enter name and address of the third party:

Name _____

Address _____

16 Gaming manager information:

Name _____

Gaming manager compensation \$ _____

Description of services provided _____

Director/officer Employee Independent contractor

- 17** Mandatory distributions:
 - a** Is the organization required under state law to make charitable distributions from the gaming proceeds to retain the state gaming license? **Yes** **No**
 - b** Enter the amount of distributions required under state law to be distributed to other exempt organizations or spent in the organization's own exempt activities during the tax year _____ \$

Part IV Supplemental Information. Provide the explanations required by Part I, line 2b, columns (iii) and (v); and Part III, lines 9, 9b, 10b, 15b, 15c, 16, and 17b, as applicable. Also provide any additional information. See instructions.

**SCHEDULE I
(Form 990)**

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Name of the organization

MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Grants and Other Assistance to Organizations,
Governments, and Individuals in the United States**

Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 21 or 22.

Attach to Form 990.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for the latest information.

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

**Open to Public
Inspection**

Employer identification number

36-3028768

Part I General Information on Grants and Assistance

- 1 Does the organization maintain records to substantiate the amount of the grants or assistance, the grantees' eligibility for the grants or assistance, and the selection criteria used to award the grants or assistance? Yes No
- 2 Describe in Part IV the organization's procedures for monitoring the use of grant funds in the United States.

Part II Grants and Other Assistance to Domestic Organizations and Domestic Governments. Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 21, for any recipient that received more than \$5,000. Part II can be duplicated if additional space is needed.

1 (a) Name and address of organization or government	(b) EIN	(c) IRC section (if applicable)	(d) Amount of cash grant	(e) Amount of noncash assistance	(f) Method of valuation (book, FMV, appraisal, other)	(g) Description of noncash assistance	(h) Purpose of grant or assistance
(1)							
(2)							
(3)							
(4)							
(5)							
(6)							
(7)							
(8)							
(9)							
(10)							
(11)							
(12)							

- 2 Enter total number of section 501(c)(3) and government organizations listed in the line 1 table
- 3 Enter total number of other organizations listed in the line 1 table

Part III Grants and Other Assistance to Domestic Individuals. Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 22.
Part III can be duplicated if additional space is needed.

(a) Type of grant or assistance	(b) Number of recipients	(c) Amount of cash grant	(d) Amount of noncash assistance	(e) Method of valuation (book, FMV, appraisal, other)	(f) Description of noncash assistance
1 See Schedule I, Part IV, Statement 1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Part IV Supplemental Information. Provide the information required in Part I, line 2; Part III, column (b); and any other additional information.

Schedule I, Part I, Line 2 - Grants are overwhelmingly used to study music at Merit. A few grants are made to underwrite summer camp attendance and as college scholarships. We verify attendance/enrollment in the camps and colleges.

Description of Grants and Other Assistance to Individuals in the United States

		Number of recipients	Amt. of cash grant	Amt. of non-cash asst.
Type of grant	No single grant of \$5,000 or more is distributed to any one student.	843	0	0
Method of valuation				
Desc. of Non-Cash Asst.	Grants are overwhelmingly used to study music at Merit. A few grants are made to underwrite summer camp attendance and as college scholarships. We verify			

**SCHEDULE J
(Form 990)**

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Name of the organization

Compensation Information

For certain Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees
Complete if the organization answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, line 23.
Attach to Form 990.
Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

Open to Public Inspection

Employer identification number

36-3028768

MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Part I Questions Regarding Compensation

	Yes	No
<p>1a Check the appropriate box(es) if the organization provided any of the following to or for a person listed on Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a. Complete Part III to provide any relevant information regarding these items.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> First-class or charter travel <input type="checkbox"/> Housing allowance or residence for personal use <input type="checkbox"/> Travel for companions <input type="checkbox"/> Payments for business use of personal residence <input type="checkbox"/> Tax indemnification and gross-up payments <input type="checkbox"/> Health or social club dues or initiation fees <input type="checkbox"/> Discretionary spending account <input type="checkbox"/> Personal services (such as maid, chauffeur, chef) </p>		
<p>b If any of the boxes on line 1a are checked, did the organization follow a written policy regarding payment or reimbursement or provision of all of the expenses described above? If "No," complete Part III to explain</p>	1b	
<p>2 Did the organization require substantiation prior to reimbursing or allowing expenses incurred by all directors, trustees, and officers, including the CEO/Executive Director, regarding the items checked on line 1a?</p>	2	
<p>3 Indicate which, if any, of the following the organization used to establish the compensation of the organization's CEO/Executive Director. Check all that apply. Do not check any boxes for methods used by a related organization to establish compensation of the CEO/Executive Director, but explain in Part III.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation committee <input type="checkbox"/> Written employment contract <input type="checkbox"/> Independent compensation consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Compensation survey or study <input type="checkbox"/> Form 990 of other organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Approval by the board or compensation committee </p>		
<p>4 During the year, did any person listed on Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a, with respect to the filing organization or a related organization:</p>		
<p>a Receive a severance payment or change-of-control payment?</p>	4a	✓
<p>b Participate in or receive payment from a supplemental nonqualified retirement plan?</p>	4b	✓
<p>c Participate in or receive payment from an equity-based compensation arrangement?</p> <p>If "Yes" to any of lines 4a–c, list the persons and provide the applicable amounts for each item in Part III.</p>	4c	✓
<p>Only section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(29) organizations must complete lines 5–9.</p>		
<p>5 For persons listed on Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a, did the organization pay or accrue any compensation contingent on the revenues of:</p>		
<p>a The organization?</p>	5a	✓
<p>b Any related organization?</p> <p>If "Yes" on line 5a or 5b, describe in Part III.</p>	5b	✓
<p>6 For persons listed on Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a, did the organization pay or accrue any compensation contingent on the net earnings of:</p>		
<p>a The organization?</p>	6a	✓
<p>b Any related organization?</p> <p>If "Yes" on line 6a or 6b, describe in Part III.</p>	6b	✓
<p>7 For persons listed on Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a, did the organization provide any nonfixed payments not described on lines 5 and 6? If "Yes," describe in Part III</p>	7	✓
<p>8 Were any amounts reported on Form 990, Part VII, paid or accrued pursuant to a contract that was subject to the initial contract exception described in Regulations section 53.4958-4(a)(3)? If "Yes," describe in Part III</p>	8	✓
<p>9 If "Yes" on line 8, did the organization also follow the rebuttable presumption procedure described in Regulations section 53.4958-6(c)?</p>	9	

Part II Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees. Use duplicate copies if additional space is needed.

For each individual whose compensation must be reported on Schedule J, report compensation from the organization on row (i) and from related organizations, described in the instructions, on row (ii). Do not list any individuals that aren't listed on Form 990, Part VII.

Note: The sum of columns (B)(i)–(iii) for each listed individual must equal the total amount of Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a, applicable column (D) and (E) amounts for that individual.

(A) Name and Title		(B) Breakdown of W-2 and/or 1099-MISC and/or 1099-NEC compensation			(C) Retirement and other deferred compensation	(D) Nontaxable benefits	(E) Total of columns (B)(i)–(D)	(F) Compensation in column (B) reported as deferred on prior Form 990
		(i) Base compensation	(ii) Bonus & incentive compensation	(iii) Other reportable compensation				
1	Charles Grode, President and Executive Director	(i) 192,310	(ii) 0	(iii) 0	0	6,436	198,746	0
		(ii) 0	(ii) 0	(ii) 0	0	0	0	0
2		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
3		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
4		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
5		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
6		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
7		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
8		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
9		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
10		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
11		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
12		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
13		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
14		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
15		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				
16		(i)	(ii)	(iii)				
		(ii)	(ii)	(ii)				

**SCHEDULE M
(Form 990)**

Noncash Contributions

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

**Open to Public
Inspection**

Complete if the organizations answered "Yes" on Form 990, Part IV, lines 29 or 30.
Attach to Form 990.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Name of the organization

MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Employer identification number

36-3028768

Part I Types of Property

	(a) Check if applicable	(b) Number of contributions or items contributed	(c) Noncash contribution amounts reported on Form 990, Part VIII, line 1g	(d) Method of determining noncash contribution amounts
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9	✓	0	300,702	Revenue from same-day sale
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				

29	Number of Forms 8283 received by the organization during the tax year for contributions for which the organization completed Form 8283, Part V, Donee Acknowledgement	29	0
----	---	----	---

	Yes	No
30a		✓
31	✓	
32a	✓	
33		

Part II Supplemental Information. Provide the information required by Part I, lines 30b, 32b, and 33, and whether the organization is reporting in Part I, column (b), the number of contributions, the number of items received, or a combination of both. Also complete this part for any additional information.

Schedule M, Part I, Line 32b - Merit engages a registered broker / dealer to sell all stock contributions received as gifts.

Lined area for supplemental information.

**SCHEDULE O
(Form 990)**

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Supplemental Information to Form 990 or 990-EZ

Complete to provide information for responses to specific questions on
Form 990 or 990-EZ or to provide any additional information.

Attach to Form 990 or Form 990-EZ.

Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for the latest information.

OMB No. 1545-0047

2023

**Open to Public
Inspection**

Name of the organization

MERIT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Employer identification number

36-3028768

Form 990, Part VI, Section A, Line 2 - Several members of Merit's Board of Life Trustees are related family.

Form 990, Part VI, Section A, Line 4 - Merit's By-Laws were updated and approved by the Board of Trustees during the fiscal year 2024.

Form 990, Part VI, Section B, Line 11b - Prior to filing, the 990 is electronically distributed to the Board of Trustees and reviewed with the Finance Committee in person.

Form 990, Part VI, Section B, Line 12c - The Executive and Board Relations Assistant reviews the disclosed and potential conflicts of interest forms completed. Any concerns are brought to the attention of the Executive Director and the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees

Form 990, Part VI, Section B, Line 15 - The Chair of Trustees and Executive Committee reviews the performance and compensation of the President & Executive Director. The President & Executive Director reviews and determines the compensation of the Vice President for Development & Marketing, the Dean & Vice President for Programming, and the Vice President for Finance & Administration

Form 990, Part VI, Section C, Line 19 - Copies of the requested documents (Audited Financial Statements, Form 990, Policies and Procedures) are provided upon email, verbal or written request. Audited Financial Statements and the Form 990 are publicly posted on Merit's website.

Reasonable Cause Explanations

Explanation

Awaiting for information to complete the filing, as well as follow documented governance procedures for Form 990 review

Mission Description

Description

springboard for achieving their full personal potential, with 100% of Merit graduates going on to college. The community music school's programming continuum consists of five major areas: Early Childhood, Instrumental & Vocal Music Program(Group classes), Private Lessons, Merit Music in Communities, and the Alice S. Pfaelzer Conservatory.

Other Program Services Accomplishments

Activity Code	Description	Expense	Grants	Revenue
	Merit's Alice S. Pfaelzer Conservatory accepts approximately 300 students annually, by competitive audition. Each Saturday, students receive a full day of pre-collegiate classes including technique, music theory, chamber music, large ensembles, masterclasses, and more-all TUITION-FREE. 100 percent of Conservatory students graduate high school and many are accepted to the most prestigious university and conservatory programs, often achieving successful careers in music performance or education.	1,026,056	0	109,639
	In addition to Merit's programming continuum, the music school is also a lead partner for Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative, a multi-organization collaborative effort with a mission to identify and develop gifted and motivated orchestral students from underrepresented backgrounds for acceptance into top-tier conservatory, college or university classical music programs in preparation for careers as professional musicians.	684,693	180,578	0
	Early Childhood, Summer, other music instruction programming, and student support. Early Childhood Programs offer weekly day-time music exploration classes for newborns to age 7. Merit's Instrumental and Ensemble camps offer a wide variety of worthwhile and fun summer musical experiences for intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced students. Merit's program administration and Student Support Services provide support for students and program pedagogy.	447,894	0	149,157
Total:		2,158,643	180,578	258,796