

Dear Friends and Supporters,

When Dedham School of Music was established in 2008, there were only eight students. Yet we had a clear objective: to hire outstanding teachers and provide access to affordable music education, performance, and creation for students of all ages, abilities, and means. Our students thrive in a learning environment that prioritizes teaching approaches that are individualized, accommodating, and catering to all types of learners/musicians. Those of all abilities flourish under the supervision of our amazingly talented faculty, adept at empowerment. Our students learn the magic of creation, self-confidence, and communication skills, as well as to trust themselves, to listen, and to appreciate that they are capable of mastering skills with practice. They enjoy making music individually and with others and learn to take risks in a safe environment.

Now in our 17th year, we are serving close to 200 students in private lessons, classes, and ensembles. We have held or hosted many performances this past year and have begun a new concert series: *First Fridays Classical and Jazz Concerts*, which started in October 2024.

We have stayed true to our mission of making music accessible, with 20% of our students receiving financial aid this past year. We are proud to say that DSM has never turned away anyone unable to afford to participate. We provided programming at the local housing authority residences over the past three years—not only eliminating the financial barrier to music but also addressing transportation issues.

We could not have done this over the past 17 years without our donors. Thank you for your ongoing support of this small non-profit with a big mission.

In 2025, we want to expand performance opportunities for both adults and children, increase enrollment in our private lessons, and add more group classes and ensembles. Together, we can achieve these goals.

Please reach out to us at any time with any questions, concerns, or ideas. We look forward to hearing from you. And visit our website for this year's programs.

Best,

Jody Pongratz (she/her), *Executive Director*

Fred Wofford (he/him), *President - DSM Board*

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023-24

New DSM Video: One warm spring day, we interviewed some students, families, and faculty and produced the

New Website: In partnership with Framingham State University, we premiered our new website early this summer after two business classes worked with our ED and board marketing committee.

New Program – Singing Alive: This program was developed because many, especially the elderly and those with disabilities, faced isolation and loneliness during the pandemic.



Partnering with Dedham Housing Authority, we met with staff and residents to determine their needs. Our overarching goal was to provide a group music experience that brings people together and builds community.

Participants now have a weekly event to look forward to, offering them the opportunity to create new relationships and strengthen existing ones as they all find their voices. This uplifting singing experience, led by a DSM instructor, allows participants to:

- Free and strengthen their voices.
- Sing simple harmonies.
- Invoke memories from old melodies.
- Explore their bodies as percussion.
- Share the joy of singing in a circle.

See more at [dedham.org](#)

Oakdale Square Concerts: Once again this summer, free concerts were held in Oakdale Square for the community.



Faculty Benefit Concert

In May, we held our first Faculty Benefit Concert, where members of our faculty performed to raise money for our school, sponsored by Needham Bank. It was such a wonderful event that we decided to collaborate with First Church Dedham to produce a monthly *Classical and Jazz* concert series this year.

DPS Strings Program

In collaboration with Dedham Public Schools, we are providing a series of weekly after-school Strings Classes, open to students of all ages from DPS schools, taught by a DSM Strings Faculty instructor.



What Towns Are Our Students From?

- 55% of our students are from Dedham.
- 45% are from other towns, including Boston (Jamaica Plain, Hyde Park, Roslindale, and West Roxbury), Easton, Natick, Needham, Newton, Norwood, Sharon, Walpole, Wellesley, and Westwood.



Our Mission

Dedham School of Music provides an environment for people of all ages, abilities, and means to learn, play, and enjoy music.

Financial Profile

Our annual income in 2023-2024:

- Tuition: 70%
- Fundraising and donations: 25%
- Grants: 5%



Board of Directors & Officers

Board Executive Officers

- Fred Wofford, *President*
- Sam Gillman & John Monahan, *Vice Presidents*
- Marcy Merrill, *Treasurer*
- Brenden Smith, *Clerk*

Board Members

- Michael Butler
- Michael Emery
- Katie Jillson
- Heather Kirby
- Jessica Reece
- Lisa Seibert
- Jody Pongratz, *Executive Director*

Making a Difference

For the first time in the history of DSM, 20% of our private students and those in ensembles received full or partial financial aid directly from Dedham School of Music. Your support and gift have made a difference to students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience the life-changing benefits of a quality music education. We thank you for your generosity and support!

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Dedham School of Music

