

# 2026|27 Elementary Opera Residency

## Program Overview

**Grade Levels:** 1-5

**Program Duration:** 13 or 18 sessions (typically once a week)

**Session Length:** one full class period (50-60 minutes) for each participating class

This multidisciplinary program engages students in grades 1-5 in creating and performing an original opera that integrates curricular learning objectives with arts learning in music, theater, and movement. Teachers and Lyric teaching artists work collaboratively to develop a custom residency plan that addresses desired learning outcomes while students participate in creative storytelling through the art of opera. Teachers determine a session schedule that coordinates with the established class meeting schedule. The program can be implemented any time during the school year.

*\*This program requires participating classroom teachers to attend a Professional Development Workshop on **Friday, August 14, 2026.***

## Program Goals

- Develop students' knowledge and understanding of the essential elements of opera
- Develop students' artistic skills in music, theater, and movement
- Promote students' reading comprehension and creative writing skills by developing an original opera libretto (*i.e.*, script)
- Promote students' verbal presentation and performance skills
- Promote students' social and emotional development by working together to accomplish common goals
- Support additional student learning objectives identified by the classroom teacher

## Program Details

### All programs:

- Pair grade-level classroom teachers with one professional Lyric teaching artist to determine desired learning objectives, theme or focus of the opera, and session meeting schedule
- Are unique and developed to meet the specific needs of each school, grade level, and classroom
- Develop the skills and knowledge students need to act, sing, and produce an original opera

### 13-session (required for all new partner schools)

- Teachers select a story or book (which has been read before the residency begins) to be adapted into an opera by the class
- Teaching artist and students collaborate to write a libretto (script) for the opera based on the story and unique student contributions
- Session 12 is the final presentation of student work
- Session 13 provides students with the opportunity to reflect on the experience

### 18-session (optional, for returning partner schools only)

- Teachers select a theme, concept, or story related to academic learning objectives (academic content, SEL, or other)
- Teaching artist works with students to write an original libretto based on the chosen theme or story
- Session 17 is the final presentation of student work
- Session 18 provides students with the opportunity to reflect on the experience

## Time Commitments

- Teachers work with teaching artist to determine program start/end dates and regular meeting times that align best with school calendar, class meeting schedule, curricular goals, and teaching artist availability.
- Teachers must devote the **entire** class period (50–60 minutes) to each of the **13 or 18 sessions** led by the teaching artist.
- Each session occurs in the teacher’s classroom, during academic class time (**not** during “specials” or after school).
- Sessions typically occur once a week at a regularly scheduled day and time (e.g., every Tuesday at 10:00 AM).
  - If multiple classes are participating, we ask that class meetings be scheduled “back-to-back” if possible (e.g., Class A at 10:00 and Class B at 11:00).
- All participating classroom teachers are **required to attend** a one-day Professional Development Workshop. This **6-hour** workshop will take place on Friday, August 14, 2026. Teachers receive **6 CPDUs** for participating. This workshop is **free of charge** for all participating teachers.

## Partnership Commitments

- School provides consistent session scheduling and dedicated learning environment (*i.e.*, classroom)
- School provides access to a working piano or keyboard on site (if available)
- School commits to collaborating with students, other faculty or parents to create sets, props, and/or costumes (as desired)
- School provides rehearsal time for the final presentation in a dedicated performance space (typically the last three sessions in the auditorium, cafetorium, gym, etc.)
- Teacher approaches sessions as an **active, engaged participant** and guides classroom management
- Teacher communicates on a consistent basis with the teaching artist regarding daily lesson plans, student progress or challenges, and any changes to the determined schedule
- Teacher copies and distributes all necessary materials for the program
- Teacher completes any necessary activities before and after each session and makes cross-curricular connections
- Teacher and teaching artist collaborate to tailor program to address desired curricular goals of the classroom
- Teaching artist develops and shares weekly lesson plans with teacher in advance of each session
- Teaching artist produces a fully-staged public sharing of student work
- Teaching artist assesses student progress and adjusts lesson plans throughout the program
- Lyric Opera provides ongoing support for classroom teachers and teaching artists in all aspects of the partnership
- Lyric Opera provides relevant materials and training for classroom teachers and teaching artists to successfully implement program and produce the final presentation

## Program Costs

Through the generosity of Chicago’s philanthropic community, Lyric is able to offer this program **free of charge** to a limited number of CPS and Big Shoulders Fund Network elementary school partners. Once the available partnerships have been filled, remaining qualified schools will be placed on a “wait list” and contacted should a space become available.

## Application Information

- Classroom teachers are encouraged to submit the application with the support of the school's music teacher and/or arts liaison.
  - *Applicants must have school principal approval before submitting an application*
- Timeline
  - April – Applications available
  - April and May – Applicant interviews conducted
  - Early June – Schools notified of status
  - August – Teacher Professional Development Workshop
  - September through May – Residencies take place
- Applicants need the following information to complete the online application:
  - School, teacher, and arts liaison (CPS only) contact information
  - Principal contact information and consent to apply
  - Confirm whether or not your school has a functional and easily accessible piano or keyboard for the program, if available
  - An idea of which grade level you think is best suited for this program and why
  - Number of classes and approximate number of students per class for desired grade level
  - An idea of when in the calendar year you think it may be best to implement the program
  - A list of any community arts partnerships planned for the upcoming year
- Lyric understands that sometimes the priorities, schedule, or personnel of a school can change. Thus, some schools may be placed on a "wait list" in case a selected school can no longer participate in the program. These schools will be contacted should a vacancy become available.

## **Common Core and SEL Standards**

*Within the given time frame (13 or 18 classroom sessions), this program aims to address the following Common Core and Social Emotional Learning standards:*

### **Common Core ELA Anchor Standards: Reading**

**R.2** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

**R.3** Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

**R.5** Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### **Common Core ELA Anchor Standards: Writing**

**W.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

**W.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**W.5** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

**W.10** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### **Common Core ELA Anchor Standards: Speaking and Listening**

**SL.1** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**SL.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

### **Common Core ELA Anchor Standards: Language**

**L.1** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

**L.3** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

**L.5** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

**L.6** Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

### **Social Emotional Learning Standards**

**1C** Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.

**2A** Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

**2B** Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.

**2C** Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.

**2D** Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

**3C** Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.

# Illinois Arts Learning Standards

*Within the given time frame (13 or 18 sessions), this program aims to address the following arts learning standards:*

## Music

**Pr4.1.3a.** Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, purpose, and context. **d.** Demonstrate and describe how intent is conveyed through expressive qualities (for example, dynamics, tempo).

**Pr5.1.3a.** Apply teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to evaluate accuracy of ensemble performances.

**Pr6.1.3a.** Perform music with expression and technical accuracy. **b.** Perform appropriately for the audience and purpose.

**Re8.1.3a.** Demonstrate and describe how the expressive qualities (for example, dynamics, tempo) are used in performers' interpretations to reflect expressive intent.

**Cn10.1.3a.** Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music as developmentally appropriate.

**Cn11.1.3a.** Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life as developmentally appropriate.

## Theatre

**Cr1.1.3a.** Create roles, imagined worlds, and improvised stories in a drama/theatre work. **b.** Imagine and articulate ideas for costumes, props and sets for the environment and characters in a drama/theatre work. **c.** Imagine how a character might move and speak to support the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

**Cr2.1.3a.** Devise original ideas focused on character and plot for a drama/ theatre work. **b.** Contribute ideas and accept/incorporate the ideas of others in preparing or devising a drama/theatre work.

**Cr3.1.3a.** Contribute to the adaptation of the plot and dialogue in a drama/theatre work. **b.** Participate and contribute to physical and vocal exploration in an improvised or scripted drama/theatre work. **c.** Practice and refine design and technical choices to support a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

**Pr4.1.3a.** Identify major dramatic elements in a drama/theatre work. **b.** Use body, face, gestures, and voice to communicate character traits and emotions in a scene.

**Pr5.1.3a.** Participate in a variety of improvisational exercises. **b.** Identify the basic technical elements that can be used in drama/theatre work.

**Pr6.1.5a.** Communicate for a specific purpose through a drama/theatre work to an invited audience.

**Re8.1.3a.** Describe a personal experience that relates to a moment in a drama/theatre work. **b.** Explore folk tales or stories from multiple cultures through drama/ theatre experience. **c.** Examine characters' feelings and make connections to personal feelings in a drama/ theatre work.

**Cn10.1.4a.** Identify the ways drama/theatre work reflects the perspectives of a community or culture.

**Cn11.1.4a.** Respond to community and social issues and incorporate other content areas in drama/theatre work.

**Cn11.2.3a.** Explore how stories are adapted from literature to drama/theatre work.

**C11.2.4a.** Investigate cross-cultural approaches to storytelling in drama/ theatre work. **b.** Identify historical sources that explain drama/theatre terminology and design conventions.

## Dance

**Cr1.1.2a.** Explore movement inspired by a variety of stimuli (for example, music/sound, text, objects, images, symbols, observed dance, experiences) and suggest additional sources for movement ideas.

**Cr2.1.2b.** Choose movements that express a main idea, or emotion or follow a musical phrase. Explain reasons for movement choices.

**Pr4.1.1a.** Demonstrate locomotor and non-locomotor movements that change body shapes, levels, and facings. Move in straight, curved, and zigzagged pathways. Find and return to place in space. Move with others to form straight lines and circles. **b.** Relate quick, moderate, and slow movements to duration in time. Recognize steady beat and move to varying tempi of steady beat.

**Pr5.1.2a.** Demonstrate a range of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, body patterning, and dance sequences that require moving through space using a variety of pathways. **b.** Move safely in a variety of spatial relationships and formations with other dancers, sharing and maintaining personal space and exploring levels, directions, and pathway designs. **c.** Repeat movements with an awareness of self and others in space. Self adjust and modify movements or placement upon request.