

# The BKCM Community Music Center



**155** STUDENTS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN  
BKCM PROGRAMMING AT THE CMC

*"My family and I have been so impressed by BKCM that we've been spreading the word about the CMC. You bring so much value to our community that cannot be put into words."*

— CMC PARENT

**CHALLENGE:** How can we provide a five-year continuum of uninterrupted, year-round music education for young people as they navigate critical—and often destabilizing—transitions from elementary to middle school?

When students advance into middle school, their music education often abruptly ends. Even when middle schools offer music, there's a lack of continuity and consistency in the programs and instruments offered. This disruption, combined with social pressures, longer commutes and other new demands and stresses in students' lives, leads to high attrition.

**SOLUTION:** We created a new model for seamless, year-round music education starting in the later elementary school years and extending through middle school to ease this crucial transition. We began by focusing on the East New York and Cypress Hills neighborhoods, where we have a 20-year partnership with the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation and longstanding neighborhood school relationships. In fall 2022, we opened our first BKCM Community Music Center (CMC) in Cypress Hills/East New York. In tandem, we expanded our partnerships with local schools to provide in-school and afterschool music programs at five elementary and middle schools within a mile of the CMC.

**IMPACT:**

- We provide **up to six hours a week** of free or heavily subsidized music education, including private lessons, to **55 fourth through eighth graders** living in East New York and Cypress Hills.
- **45 young children** benefit from our **CMC early childhood music classes**, which we introduced after community members expressed a need.
- Students develop **consistent relationships with teaching artists and fellow musicians**, which endure even when they switch schools.
- The CMC has blossomed into a **welcoming, year-round community gathering space** for students and their families.