

Musicopia's Classical Music Adopt-A-School Program, Sponsored by WRTI 90.1 fm

At Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School, students already benefit from an outstanding music program. However, their classroom music teacher, Mr. William Valencia, recognized the need for a classical music program and sought help from Musicopia. Additionally, classical music radio station [WRTI 90.1 fm](#) approached Musicopia to sponsor an in-school program, making it possible to bring William's vision to life.



Mr. Valencia likens teaching classical music to teaching classical literature. As he explained, if we think of music as a language, classical music is the sophisticated language we read in novels or Shakespeare, and popular music is the language we read daily in magazines or on social media. “Classical music is high-information music. It has different instrumentation, chord progression, melodies, and dynamics than other styles of music,” he explained. Due to its complexity, studying it is necessary for an increased understanding of music. “We have to teach it because the students aren’t going to be exposed to it,” he emphasized.

This school year, 40 Hostos students will have the chance to learn to play string instruments under the instruction of Mr. Valencia and a Musicopia Teaching Artist. Mr. Valencia has a long-standing relationship with Musicopia and was a former Teaching Artist. He taught bass and cello to students in the [Musicopia String Orchestra](#) and also taught high schoolers in Spanish in an in-school program.

Over the last few years, Musicopia has played a vital role in fostering the school’s thriving music programming. Students at this K-8 school are required to learn how to play an instrument starting in grade two. They learn a new instrument every year, beginning with the piano, followed by the recorder, the trumpet, the mellophone, a brass instrument of their choice, and percussion. Musicopia’s Teaching Artists offer advanced support to students learning brass and percussion instruments which aren’t Mr. Valencia’s strong suit. Musicopia has also helped Hostos by donating more than half of the school’s instruments through its [Instrument Donation Program](#).

Mr. Valenica feels strongly that the instrument-based music education at Hostos supports a well-rounded education, teaching cognitive, psychological, social, and life skills. Since learning an instrument is mandatory, students have discovered a passion and acquired skills they may not have otherwise. “They love to play”, Mr. Valencia shared with pride. “Some students come after class to play piano or ask to take their trumpets home.” Musicopia looks forward to seeing how the classical music program gives students at Hostos an even deeper understanding and appreciation of music.

Musicopia is deeply grateful to WRTI for their invaluable support in making this program a reality. WRTI has not only supported Musicopia’s programs, but has also advocated for the organization’s mission on air, shared student stories, acted as a partner to its Instrument Donation Program, and is one of its [instrument drop-off locations](#). Thank you, WRTI, for recognizing and amplifying the importance of Musicopia’s work in inspiring a love of learning through music.