



Sistema

Toronto

**SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH MUSIC EDUCATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019**

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD PRESIDENT

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Dear Friends & Supporters,

We are thrilled to have wrapped up another great year at Sistema Toronto. Working with 275 children, we helped students build their musical abilities while developing key social skills that will allow them to thrive as future leaders in their communities.

Toronto is a vibrant and diverse city, but it does not provide equal opportunities for all. At Sistema Toronto we work with families who face systematic barriers to success. Many of our families are from racialized and newcomer communities, and they face daily challenges with low-income, lack of quality education, and food insecurity. Our program helps families escape the cycle of poverty by offering free after-school childcare, music lessons, instruments, skills building, and a nutrition program to fight food scarcity.

We continue to see great progress in our students at all levels, both as musicians and well-rounded young leaders. This year we practiced teamwork, listening, respect, problem solving, responsibility, organization, communication, and leadership while learning strings, choir, theory, and percussion. Many of our students have also seen improvements in their academic abilities at school as a result of attending our program, and we're extremely proud of their accomplishments.

Our work would not be possible without the individuals, foundations, and corporations that share our values and donate in support of the children and families we serve. We truly believe in our vision of using the global language of music to help children grow and realize their full potential as engaged and responsible citizens, and hope you do too. This annual report highlights key information regarding our program as well as the impact of your support.

Thank you for investing in vulnerable communities and providing support that enables future generations to flourish. Together we can make a powerful difference.

Sincerely,



Marcia Lewis Brown
President & Board Chair
Sistema Toronto



Christie Gray
Executive Director
Sistema Toronto

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MISSION AND VISION

Sistema Toronto provides musical and intellectual opportunities to children in vulnerable communities, with the goal of transformative social change. We work with students ages 6-15 in neighbourhoods with some of Toronto's highest child poverty rates – Parkdale, Jane-Finch, and East Scarborough. Sistema Toronto students learn together in orchestras, percussion ensembles, and choirs while developing important life skills like problem solving, empathy, and communication. We provide students with instruction from professional musicians, instruments, performance opportunities, and a daily nutritious snack, all at no cost to participants' families. We build stronger communities by enabling children to overcome poverty, grow, and thrive as engaged citizens and future leaders.

MISSION

Sistema Toronto is an intensive social program transforming the lives of children through ensemble-based music.

VISION

Through the global language of music, children grow to realize their full potential as engaged and responsible citizens.

NO AUDITIONS

NO BARRIERS

NO COST

THE CHALLENGE

Despite being an incredibly wealthy city, Toronto has the highest child poverty rate amongst large cities in Canada, and children of colour, Indigenous children, immigrants, children with disabilities, and children from single-parent families are more likely to experience poverty. ¹

One third of racialized children (33.3%) in Toronto live in low-income families, while in comparison 15.1% of non-racialized children live in poverty. ²



Children who grow up in marginalized and low-income households are less likely to achieve academic and social success and are more likely to depend on social services, experience physical and mental health problems, and live in poverty as adults.

Humber River – Black Creek (Jane-Finch) and Scarborough –Guildwood (East Scarborough) are among the six neighbourhoods with the highest number of families waiting for subsidized housing in the city. ³

Toronto parents spend an average of \$21,096 on child care annually, the highest rate of any Canadian city. ⁴

Housing costs have grown four times faster than income, and rent costs have grown two times faster than income over the last decade.



Furthermore, over the last 12 years, Toronto's wait list for social housing has increased by 68%. ⁵



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¹ Toronto Foundation. (2018) Toronto's Vital Signs. Retrieved from <https://torontofoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/TF-VS-web-FINAL-4MB.pdf>
² Social Planning Toronto, Wilson, B., Maddox, R., Polanyi, M., Kerr, M., Ekra, M., & Khanna, A. (2018). 2018 Toronto Child & Family Poverty Report: Municipal Election Edition. Retrieved from https://d3n8a8pr07vhmx.cloudfront.net/socialplanningtoronto/pages/2079/attachments/original/1538147211/2018_
³ Social Planning Toronto, Wilson, B., Maddox, R., Polanyi, M., Kerr, M., Ekra, M., & Khanna, A. (2018). 2018 Toronto Child & Family Poverty Report: Municipal Election Edition. Retrieved from https://d3n8a8pr07vhmx.cloudfront.net/socialplanningtoronto/pages/2079/attachments/original/1538147211/2018_Child_Family_Poverty_Report_Municipal_Election_Edition.pdf?1538147211
⁴ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. (2017). Time Out: Child care fees in Canada 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2017/12/Time%20Out.pdf>
⁵ Toronto Foundation. (2019) Toronto's Vital Signs. Retrieved from <https://torontofoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/VitalSigns2019.pdf>

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OUR COMMUNITIES

Sistema Toronto communities are in diverse neighbourhoods with wide wealth divides and high rates of child poverty. The students and families we serve face economic challenges and social disadvantages that result in difficulty accessing the limited opportunities available to them.

JANE-FINCH



HOUSEHOLDS THAT EARN LESS THAN \$50K /YEAR

47%

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN THE ENTIRE WARD

37.8%

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN THE WARD'S POOREST AREAS

55.2%

SINGLE PARENTS

35%

VISIBLE MINORITIES

74%

OF ADULTS WITH POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

38%

EAST-SCARBOROUGH



HOUSEHOLDS THAT EARN LESS THAN \$50K /YEAR

43%

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN THE ENTIRE WARD

47.4%

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN THE WARD'S POOREST AREAS

59.2%

SINGLE PARENTS

26%

VISIBLE MINORITIES

71%

OF ADULTS WITH POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

50%

PARKDALE



HOUSEHOLDS THAT EARN LESS THAN \$50K /YEAR

40%

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN THE ENTIRE WARD

16.8%

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY IN THE WARD'S POOREST AREAS

43.5%

SINGLE PARENTS

17%

VISIBLE MINORITIES

26%

OF ADULTS WITH POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

69%

CORE PROGRAM DELIVERY

Sistema Toronto students learn together for ten hours each week developing important life skills while making music together in orchestras, choirs, and percussion ensembles. They receive a daily nutritious snack, musical instruments, and instruction all at no cost to participants' families.

Sistema Toronto's curricula keeps social learning as top priority, building well-rounded musicians, strong collaborators, and community leaders. When students graduate from Sistema Toronto's core program in grade 8, they are equipped with the communication skills, confidence, and grit they need to excel in high school, access opportunities, and escape generational poverty.

IN 2018-19 SISTEMA TORONTO IMPACTED

275

STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN

3

PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS IN TORONTO.

EACH OF OUR STUDENTS RECEIVED OVER

350

HOURS OF FREE MUSIC EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING.

6 City of Toronto. (2016). Ward Profiles. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/neighbourhoods-communities/ward-profiles/>
 7 Social Planning Toronto, Wilson, B., Maddox, R., Polanyi, M., Kerr, M., Ekra, M., & Khanna, A. (2018). 2018 Toronto Child & Family Poverty Report: Municipal Election Edition. Retrieved from https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/socialplanningtoronto/pages/2079/attachments/original/1538147211/2018_Child_Family_Poverty_Report_Municipal_Election_Edition.pdf?1538147211



EVALUATING PROGRAM IMPACT

Sistema Toronto students start in our program as 6- and 7-year-olds and become their schools' top performers. They are more likely to score higher on standardized testing compared to their non-Sistema peers.

SUBJECTS

SISTEMA TORONTO STUDENTS THAT SCORE LEVELS 3 OR 4 ON EQAO TESTS

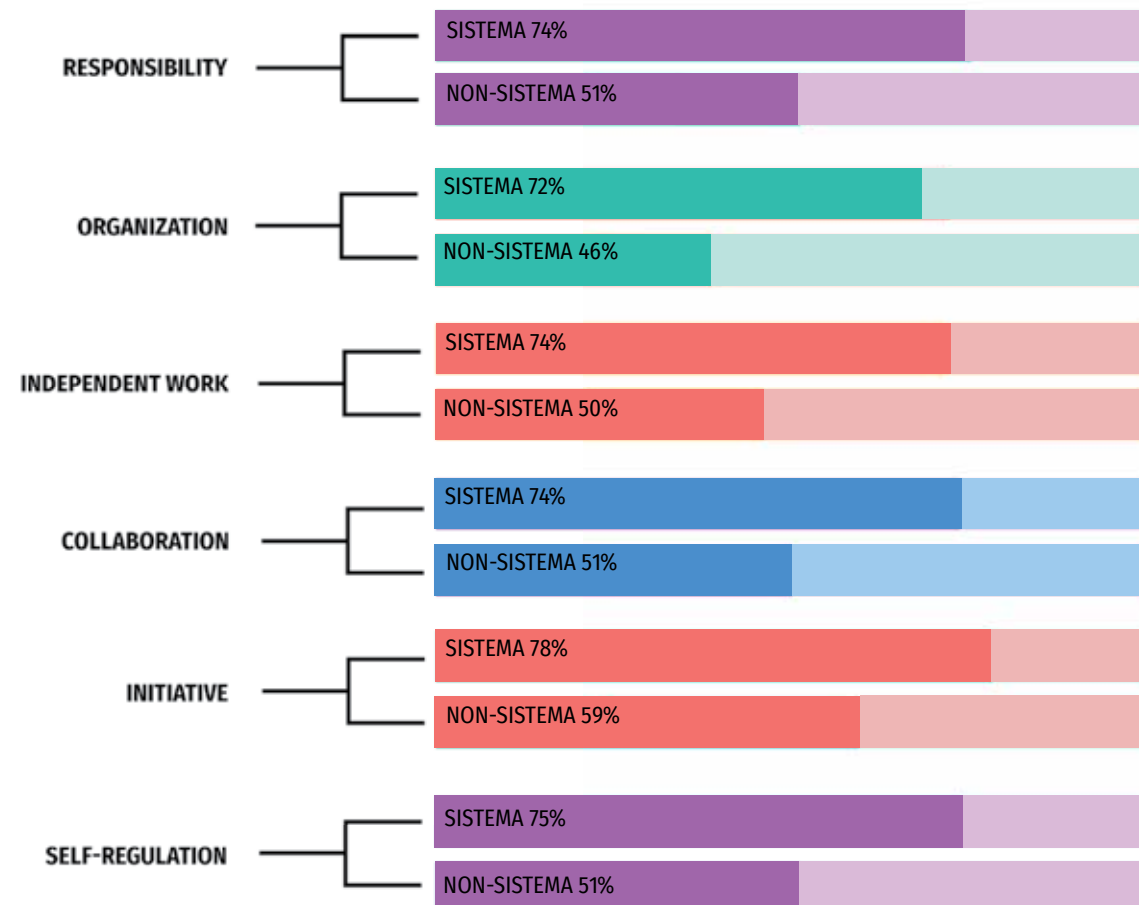


NON-SISTEMA TORONTO STUDENTS THAT SCORE LEVELS 3 OR 4 ON EQAO TESTS



LEARNING SKILLS

COMPARING SISTEMA TORONTO STUDENTS THAT SCORE LEVELS 3 OR 4 ON EQAO TESTS WITH NON-SISTEMA STUDENTS:



PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

As part of Sistema Toronto's core program, students receive opportunities to share what they are learning with their community as part of an orchestra, choir, chamber group, or percussion ensemble. These opportunities allow students to share the work they do in music classes while practicing their leadership, presentation skills, and confidence as ambassadors for Sistema Toronto. Our community partners help us provide life-changing opportunities for students by allowing them to share and experience music together.

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	January
Trio Arkel Concert*	TVO Gala	Toronto Symphony Orchestra Concert*	Scarborough Philharmonic's (SPO) Winter Concert	MPP Mitzie Hunter New Year's Levee
Nicola Benedetti Workshop	Activate Space Golden Harvest Event	Cantabile Chamber Singers Concert*	COC presents Wow Factory: A Cinderella Story*	Chinese Broadcast Orchestra Side-by-Side Performance
	Sistema Benefit Concert	Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Event	Burgundy Ball Performance	Ontario Philharmonic Tatsuki Narita Concert*
	Instacart Head Office Performance	Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra Concert*	Mercer-Park Duo concert*	Trio Arkel Concert*
	St Joseph's Hallowe'en Festival	Faculty of Music Undergraduate Association Benefit Concert	Parkdale Winter Fair	
		Music for All - A Benefit Concert for Sistema*	Parkdale Winter Concert	
			Scarborough Winter Concert	
FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
COC presents Cosi Fan Tutte*	Cantabile Chamber Singers Concert*	Ontario Strings Association Music Festival	Etobicoke School of the Arts Side-by-Side Performance	Sir Oliver Mowat Collegiate Workshop
Toronto Children's Chorus Concert*	Trio Arkel Concert*	Sistema Spirit Gala	COC presents La Boheme*	Give me Liberty Festival
Glenn Gould Prize Gala and Ceremony*		Alabaster Gates Children's Charity Fundraiser	Harbourfront Centre Junior Festival	Fay and Fluffy's Fun House Pride Performance
Jessye Norman School of the Arts Workshop		Tafelmusik's Bach and His World*	Spring into Parkdale Performance	Scarborough Spring Concert
Kiwanis Music Festival			Sir Oliver Mowat Collegiate End of Year Concert*	Yorkwoods Spring Concert
			Reading Partnership Spotlight on Literacy Event	Parkdale Spring Concert

*Indicates that Sistema Toronto students and/or families experienced the concert or event as audience members.

CURRICULA DEVELOPMENT

Sistema Toronto is continually evaluating and improving its program to ensure students are receiving the support they need to thrive. A successful three-year Ontario Trillium Foundation-supported curricula development project came to an end in the 2018-19 year.

Sistema Toronto developed a core curriculum in strings, percussion, choir, Music & Movement, and social development. The focus was on music learning outcomes and complementary social development goals that create fluidity between each subject and centre, and helps students achieve milestones so that they graduate with strong musicianship skills as well as social and academic skills.

This process has transformed our teaching and pedagogical approaches and helped us find more ways to increase student interest and engagement to learn music skills and social development skills by shifting teaching from a transactional approach to an experiential approach in learning.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

Changing our pedagogical approach has centred around shifting from a transactional approach to an experiential approach to learning. Most of us learned through transactional learning, a teacher-centered method of teaching in which the teacher dispenses all knowledge, acts as the keeper of truth, and makes all evaluations of learning. Research on educational best practices show that social transformation is more likely to occur via experiential learning. Experiential learning is an interactive way for students to learn where students are asked questions (or ask questions themselves) that will lead them to knowledge. This method of learning encourages self-evaluation, the development of problem solving skills, and produces students who have the ability to think critically. When students can shift from obedient replicators of knowledge to problem-solving critical thinking knowledge-seekers, we can set them on the path for true social change and empowerment in the long term.

SOCIAL CURRICULUM

Sistema Toronto is first and foremost a social development program. To ensure students meet the social goals of the program in addition to music goals, the Sistema team developed a social curriculum with goals and outcomes to complement the music curricula. This is in contrast to other Sistema-inspired programs, which expect social outcomes like leadership, teamwork and self-regulation to naturally occur through music education. The first five years of Sistema Toronto demonstrated that this is not always the case. The social curriculum was created to help students intentionally develop these skills by focusing on a different social development theme each month in their music classes, taught through experiential learning.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS	
TEAMWORK	LISTENING
RESPECT	PROBLEM SOLVING
RESPONSIBILITY	ORGANIZATION
COMMUNICATION	LEADERSHIP

PRODUCTION AND MEDIA

After a successful pilot program at Yorkwoods in 2017-18, the Production and Media initiative was extended to all Sistema Toronto centres for 2018-19, thanks to a grant from Toronto Foundation. Production and Media classes gave students the chance to extend their knowledge beyond music performance and learn about behind the scenes tasks such as concert production, promotion, social media, video editing, show scripting, and hosting. Students used tablets to help organize and design promotional materials, create videos for web promotion, and communicate efficiently with each other on tasks. This project also provided disadvantaged kids with access to relevant technology that many do not have in their homes. In order to be successful, students had to take on leadership roles and show tremendous teamwork and communication skills.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to providing support for children and families, Sistema Toronto is committed to employment and professional development opportunities for artists and arts educators. Sistema Toronto's teaching team met 10 times for Professional Development sessions. These sessions created space for teachers to discuss issues that arise in classrooms, share ideas, and improve curricula so that our program evolves to meet the needs of the community.

DISCUSSION TOPICS INCLUDED:

- Experiential learning
- Classroom management
- Behaviour management
- Discipline policy
- Social curriculum practicum
- Strings pedagogy and curriculum
- Choir pedagogy and curriculum
- Percussion pedagogy and curriculum
- Music and Movement pedagogy, curriculum activities, and techniques
- Integrating social and music curricula
- Review and revision of content and goals of all curricula
- Differentiating between private lesson and group class teaching techniques
- Student evaluation
- Teacher evaluation and personal teaching goals



MULTICULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Sistema Toronto is committed to providing programming that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Based on a 2017 study conducted by the Students Commission of Canada, 90% of our students identify as people of colour, some identify as Indigenous.

In 2018-19, at least 50% of our repertoire was by women, Indigenous artists, or people of colour, and Sistema Toronto students took part in a variety of workshops focused on celebrating cultural diversity with professional musicians such as OKAN, Micheal Butch, and Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk.

SISTEMA TORONTO STUDENTS LEARNED MUSIC IN 6
NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES AND FROM 9 DIFFERENT CULTURES:

CUBAN
MANDARIN
MÉTIS
ROMA
FRENCH

JAPANESE
HEBREW
SWAHILI
SPANISH

NUTRITION PROGRAM

One in five households in Toronto experience food insecurity. Low wages and inadequate social assistance, combined with the high costs of housing, child care and other necessities, are substantial obstacles to accessing healthy food.⁸

Children that come from food insecure households are more likely to experience poor mental and physical health, greater risk of chronic disease, nutrient inadequacies, and other long-term adverse health effects. It also negatively impacts their academic performance, which largely determines students' educational and professional opportunities later in life.

The Sistema Toronto Nutrition Program follows the Toronto District School Board's Healthy Food Guidelines. Each snack includes a serving of fruit or vegetables and one serving of either grain, protein or dairy.



IN 2018-19, SISTEMA TORONTO PROVIDED 275 STUDENTS WITH OVER 40,000 HEALTHY SNACKS TO HELP BOOST THEIR ENERGY LEVELS, FOCUS ON LEARNING, AND BUILD COMMUNITY IN OUR CENTRES.

⁸ City of Toronto. (2017). Report for Action: Food Insecurity in Toronto. Retrieved from <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/9112-tph-backgroundfile-107929.pdf>

SUCCESS STORIES

KISHAUN

Kishaun is a long-time student of Sistema Toronto – Parkdale. Though he sometimes lacked motivation and struggled behaviourally in his first few years of the program, Sistema Toronto staff worked alongside his mom to make sure Kishaun knew he was supported in Sistema.

This was no small feat for someone who would watch his friends playing on the basketball courts after school while he struggled to motivate himself to play his cello. Despite some setbacks, Kishaun worked hard on his cello over the years. His mom ensured that he remain focused on coming to Sistema each day after school. Kishaun's dedication to be in Sistema really paid off. He became a leader, often encouraging other students to do their best. Kishaun joined the strings program at Etobicoke School of the Arts in Fall 2019, and continues to attend Sistema Toronto for Honours Orchestra.



YESHI

Yeshi is a friend to everyone around her and has consistently shown her kindness and ability to lead others throughout her time at Sistema Toronto. She has developed into an excellent student over the years, balancing the challenges of homework, music practice, and friendship with apparent ease.

Yeshi is an excellent violinist, and she continues to play in our Honours Orchestra as well as volunteering with Sistema while thriving in the International Baccalaureate program at Parkdale CI.



2018-2019 GIVING

Thank you to all our supporters, without whom we would not be able to provide free music education and social development programming for 275 children. By donating to Sistema Toronto in 2018-2019, these generous individuals, foundations, corporations, and government grants helped children develop a life-long appreciation of music and the skills they need to find success in any area of life:

\$100,000+

Robert & Ellen Eisenberg
Azrieli Foundation
Ontario Trillium Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

TD Bank Group
Metcalf Foundation
Ontario Arts Council

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Aubrey & Marla Dan Foundation
Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation
Linda & Bob Goldberger

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Arts Access Fund
Beanfield Technologies Inc.
Edith De Souza
Jordan Family Foundation
Mackenzie Financial Charitable Foundation
Marcia Lewis Brown
Pluralism Fund
Slaight Family Foundation
Toronto Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Arthur & Audrey Cutten Foundation
Cadillac Fairview
Directors Guild of Canada

Glenn Gould Foundation
Hanna Wilmer
Kiwanis Foundation
Lay Family Foundation
Luke Jackson
McLean Foundation
Merle Kriss
PC Children's Charity
Plus1/Beirut
Retrofit Bodyworks Inc.
Scotiabank
Sobeys
Shum Vourkoutiotis Fund

\$1,000 - \$4,999

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Burgundy Asset Management Ltd.
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Sandra Ciganic-McKinney
Clayton Gyotoku Fund
D'Addario Foundation
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Delphine Roussel
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Adam Lipschitz & Gwen Seymour
Reema Shah
SOCAN Foundation
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The Kenneth G. Mills Foundation
TVO
Milos Vranesevic
Russell Westkirk
Michael Williams
York University Faculty Association
Margaret Zeidler
Zita and Mark Bernstein Family Foundation



2018-2019 GIVING

\$500 - \$999

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Marie Berard
Bryant & Soul Family Fund
David Caron
Catherine Logan Fund
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Dandelion
Patricia DiTillio
Margaret Dwyer
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Soraya Farha
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Maria Montemayor
Christine Olsen
Sebastian Ostertag
Paul Ottis
Louise Adele Peckford
Paula Pettit
Glenna Rimorin Honor
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Katherine Anderson
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Catherine Leonard
Ora Leopold
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Jennifer Lewington
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Kristin Lovell
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Suly Luu
Kari Maaren
Amanda Mack
Ian Mackenzie
Hilary Mackenzie
Kelly Macmillan
Cathy Mahuran
Oliver Mannsfeldt
Maplewood Imprest
Bella Marello

Richard Marzura
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Yolande Northrup
Anne O'Connell
Kathleen O'Connell
Eaman O'Connor
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Toronto Children's Chorus
Toronto District School Board
Toronto Catholic District School Board
Parkdale Junior & Senior Public School
Yorkwoods Public School
Military Trail Public School
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Chief Risk and Compliance Officer, General Counsel,
Richardson GMP



AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Sistema Toronto Academy Statement of Operations and Changes in Fund Balance For the year end August 31, 2019

	2019	2018
Revenue		
Corporate donations	\$132,865	\$121,763
Donations in kind	\$12,043	\$25,382
Events	\$23,915	\$14,202
Foundations and trust grants	\$521,407	\$345,233
Government grants	\$76,600	\$137,300
Individual donations including stock donations	\$268,693	\$151,003
Ontario Arts Council Operating Grant	\$50,000	\$10,000
Other revenue	\$7,901	\$250
Total Revenue	\$1,093,424	\$805,133
Expenses		
Amortization	\$48,767	\$35,356
Audit	\$10,295	\$7,498
Conferences & meetings	\$4,596	--
Cost of disposal of securities	\$170	\$340
Events & fundraising	\$18,800	\$11,131
Human resources – admin	\$276,605	\$248,350
Human resources – program delivery	\$446,871	\$397,053
Insurance	\$6,207	\$6,022
Marketing & promotion	\$15,721	\$7,638
Nutrition program	\$19,759	\$16,794
Office & general	\$25,004	\$19,574
Other program delivery costs	\$10,281	\$7,386
Program evaluation	\$6,500	\$13,000
Rent	\$18,745	\$12,122
Summer camp program	\$21,932	--
Supplemental teaching	--	\$4,701
Transportation	\$24,637	\$21,428
Total expenses	\$954,894	\$808,393
Excess of revenues over expenses	\$138,530	(\$3,260)
Net assets – beginning of year	\$51,876	\$55,136
Net assets – end of year	\$190,406	\$51,876

A full set of Audited Financial Statements are available upon request.



Sistema

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