



plugged in
ANNUAL REPORT

2026

From Sandra

I'm thrilled to write to you at such an exciting time for Plugged In and our community. If you didn't know already, this year marks 25 years of Plugged In providing accessible music education to students across Massachusetts — and none of it could have been possible without your support.

I can't say that the past two decades(!) have all been easy. Every path in life is filled with struggle, and Plugged In's is no exception. But when I reflect on the thousands of students, families and friends whose lives we've touched, it is without a doubt worth it. And when I look forward to what's coming next for Plugged In, I am filled with hope, anticipation, and awe at the things that together we have made possible.

In the following pages, you'll find stories about the real impact that your support has made and continues to make. From transformational music experiences for students of all stripes, to online learning that connects people across cultures and countries, to brand new facilities that will enhance the ways we serve our community — the effects of your giving endure day after day.

So, from the bottom of my heart: thank you, thank you, thank you for everything you have and will make possible!

Sandra and the Plugged In Team



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Sandra Rizkallah
**Co-Founder/
Executive Director**

Tom Pugh
Co-Founder

Dan Croft
Associate Director

Matthew Cunningham
Program Manager

Francis Hickey
Inclusion Coordinator

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Programming

164 Total Students
107 Returning Students
57 New Enrollments

The core of Plugged In's Programming has always been built around a simple combination: passionate students and supportive teachers in a welcoming environment. That core recipe still underpins all of our classes and programming. Today, our ensemble band classes and 1:1 serve hundreds of students from across Massachusetts.



95 | Ages 8 – 19
34 | Ages 20 – 30
35 | Ages 31+

Our Students range in age from 10-100, with eclectic backgrounds, abilities and tastes, and our tent has grown in ways we couldn't have imagined when we began our journey. What's more, we've maintained our record of meeting all demonstrated financial need through our Scholarship and Inclusion Funds — and have never turned away a student due to cost or educational needs.

“There are no report cards – only help and encouragement”

– R.K. Student

Programming

3650 Total Class Hours
1840 Band Class Hours
1555 1:1 Lesson Hours

Plugged In's reach doesn't stop there however, and with the support of an amazing community, we've grown our Programming offerings to reach music lovers wherever they are.



255 Camp Hours
**1900 Hours Funded
by Scholarship**

Through partners such as Needham Continuing Education, The Needham Council on Aging, The Perkins School for The Blind, Partnership for Youth With Disabilities and New England Village, we offer a variety of classes, workshops and performance opportunities for students of all interests and abilities.

**"I learned the amazing things
a group of people can do when
then put their minds towards
something greater"**

– Z.K. Student

Inclusion

101 Students w/ Disability
61 Enrolled in Band Class
50 Enrolled in 1:1 Lessons

As our enrollment has grown, so too has the diversity and educational needs of our student body. Thanks to the support of our community and donors, we have been able to meet those needs, and create an educational environment that allows students to thrive.



35 Bands w/ 2 Instructors
\$39,000 allocated to
Inclusion Coordinator

With the resources provided by our Scholarship and Inclusion Fund, we are able to maintain a high teacher to student ratio, create customized learning materials and lesson plans, and allow for our on-site inclusion coordinator to work directly with instructors and students. We believe music is for everyone, and with the generosity of our donors, are able to make that belief a reality.

“Plugged In allows us as a family to see and celebrate his talent, and we are so proud of his progress”

– D.N. Parent

Scholarships

\$95,000 in Scholarships \$48,000 for Disabled Students

Since our inception, Plugged In has been dedicated to providing music education to all members of our community. We are proud to have a 100% success rate in meeting the financial needs of all our students — a feat which has only been possible through the support of our community and generous grants from organizations across the state and country!

71 Student Recipients

“Through Plugged In and their scholarships, I was able to fall in love with music – I was told I matter, and that I belong the way I am”

– N.V. Student



Performances

25 Performances

“Plugged In’s Impact extends far beyond music lessons. It plays a crucial role in its members’ lives, fostering resilience and self-esteem”

– Sarah Shine, Needham Youth and Family Services

Like every year, our 2026 sessions were capped off by a concert featuring the hard work of students. This year also saw our Community Engage process, in which students select a charity to perform in support of, carried out for the first time via a digital voting platform. Facilitated by staff and volunteers, our musicians chose three wonderful causes to support through their music. The first, Mass Advocates Standing Strong, provides education, workshops and support for Massachusetts residents living with disabilities. The second, The Trevor Project, works tirelessly to prevent suicide in LGBTQIA+ youth through free crisis support, research and advocacy. The third, Rock The Vote, helps voters across the country register, and works to protect their right to participate in the democratic process.

64 Unique Bands

And this year alone, our students have performed in amazing locations like the Verve Hotel, Volante Farms, Wellesley Pride, the Boston Hatch Shell, Newport Rhode Island and more!



Facilities

Larger Band Rooms Private Practice Rooms All New Equipment

As we approach our 25th anniversary we are embarking on a new chapter in our adventure — as we leave behind our 40 Freeman Place facilities in Needham for a new space just down the road in Framingham. While we're sad to say goodbye to our space of over ten years, we're just as thrilled about the possibilities of our new location. From improved access for those with limited mobility, to brand new rehearsal spaces and dedicated private lesson practice rooms — the move will allow us to serve our existing community even better, and welcome more students, volunteers and music lovers. With our floor and construction plans approved, over the next few months we'll be transforming our space from top to bottom, and we can't wait to welcome you all!



Peace Tracks

229 Students

14 Schools

8 Countries

For the past several years, Sandra and members of the Plugged In team have been working to build a new branch of our programming that brings together students from around the world. Now in its 6th year Peace Tracks has become larger and more impactful than we could've imagined. With a grant from the U.S. State Department, and a team of instructors from across the United States and the Globe, we've connected thousands of students through the power of music.



USA



Palestine



Afghanistan



Ukraine



Morocco



Jordan



Germany



Pakistan

Collaborating with each other through a suite of on-line music production and conferencing software — students write and record an original song about the issues they face in their lives. More than just a class, students come to understand and bond with each other through their shared and disparate experiences, building connections and friendships across thousands of miles.

Thank You!

\$191,841 in Gifts
\$107,260 in Grants
\$299,101 Raised

None of the things we've accomplished over the past two and half decades could have been possible without the support of our community. Your gifts, efforts and encouragement have sustained us materially, and re-affirmed the value and change that Plugged In has created locally and globally. So, even though we know we say it a lot, thank you to all of our students, donors and volunteers for what you've helped us create. Here's to another 25!



New Look, Who's This?

You may have noticed a new logo, look and color palette in this report! While we'll always love our original logo and bright orange backgrounds, after 25 years we thought it was time for a bit of a makeover. So with the help of Connor Donovan - a talented Designer and Art Director from right here in MA - we're getting ready to debut our new branding, website and style later this year. In the meantime, you can think of this as a bit of sneak peak. If you want to see some of the other radical work that Connor has done, you can check him out online at connordonavan.net!

They Make Music, You Make It Possible.



Scan To Give Today!

Everything Plugged In has accomplished is due to the amazing support of our community. If you haven't already, now is the perfect time to donate and help us make 2027 even more incredible than 2026. No matter the amount, every dollar helps us further our mission of providing accessible, supportive music education to all!