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ChiArts Wins First Place at Illinois High School Association's (IHSA) Music Competition

Chicago, IL — The Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts) made history this month as the first Chicago Public School to win first place in the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) statewide music competition. ChiArts won the Class A overall championship after accumulating 906 points in two statewide events, 165 points ahead of Class A runner-up, Carbondale High School. Students competed in both solo and ensemble contest in March and a large ensemble contest for bands, choirs, and orchestras held in April. As the state's first public arts high school, ChiArts placed third overall last year in Class B. This year, ChiArts was moved to Class A due to IHSA reclassifications. According to IHSA archives dating back to 1972, a Chicago Public School has never won first place in any of the five classes.

In addition to earning the title of overall champions, the school's band and orchestra programs each placed third in their respective categories. ChiArts' vocal program jumped from 14th to 6th in their category this year with a record-breaking number of vocalists contributing to ChiArts' victory. ChiArts' Executive and Artistic Director, José Ochoa acclaimed "It is remarkable what our school has accomplished in 10 short years. Our young program is now held in the same regard as other schools who have long and storied histories of winning." As Mr. Ochoa mentions, schools such as Ottawa Township High School and Herscher High School have each won over 20 titles in their classifications since the IHSA competition began over 40 years ago. Mr. Ochoa attributes the program's success to the leadership of Music Conservatory Head, Betsy Ko. Ms. Ko is the founding music head of ChiArts and leads a department of almost 40 professional musicians that instruct over 160 promising musicians and singers.

Beginning in September 2019 and throughout the 2019-20 school-year, ChiArts will be celebrating its 10-year anniversary, honoring the past years of incredible growth and alumni. Many music alumni have quickly risen to the top including R&B singer [Ravyn Lenae](#), contemporary classical composer Elijah Smith, and [Joel Ross](#), a jazz vibraphonist whose much anticipated debut album is set to be released early next month. For more information on ChiArts, visit <https://chiarts.org/>.

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The Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts) is Chicago's first public high school for the arts. With disciplines in creative writing, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, ChiArts provides its scholar-artists with a tuition-free, pre-professional arts training program paired with a college-preparatory academic curriculum. ChiArts opened its doors in 2009 and has graduated six classes of scholar-artists at a rate between 92-99% each year. In 2018, ChiArts celebrated its first 100% graduation rate. Learn more about recent ChiArts news and performances on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).