



Achievement in Music Examinations (AIM)

PIANO

Illinois State Piano Exams 2023-2024

What are the benefits of taking AIM exams?

These exams enhance musicianship, develop confidence, and make a significant difference in college application process and employment search. Now that many universities have phased out standardized tests, more focus is placed on the students with extensive and relevant extracurricular activities, especially music. The same is true of the employers. They know that music training is demanding, time consuming and requires highly developed cognitive and analytical skills, as well as long-term planning. These are valuable skills for demanding college programs and employment. We recommend that students complete as many levels as possible by the end of their junior year in high school so as to include the highest-level certificate with their college applications.

AIM exams are demanding and require daily instrument practice and theory study. The goal is for students to have a positive experience and feel rewarded for their dedication and diligent work. Students receive a certificate for successful completion of the theory and the performance exams. Passing grade is 70%. Students can start from any level they are able to pass successfully and can do 2 levels per year with longer lessons and sufficient practice.

Mandatory Lesson Requirements

Due to the extensive and complex nature of these exams, they can only be prepared in 30-min or longer individual lessons.

Minimum lesson requirements per level: 1-4 = 30 min lesson; 5-7 = 45 min lesson; 8-10 = 1 hr lesson; 11 = 1hr 15 min lesson; 12 = 1 hr 30 min lesson. Combining multiple levels: there will be a special mandatory lesson length requirement decided by the teacher. Mandatory lesson time requirements applicable for quarters 1-3. Regular tuition rates apply.

Exam Dates 2023-2024:

Please inform your teacher about your intention to take the exam as soon as possible. Early preparation is the key to good scores. Registration deadlines are announced in the fall. NMA will send reminder e-mails to all NMA piano students.

Piano Exam Dates for academic year 2022-2023:

- Levels 1A, 1B, 1C, and level 2: February 3, 2024
- Theory levels 3-12: December 2 and 9, 2023
- Performance levels 3-12: March 9, 10, 16, 17, 2024

In order to enroll in the performance exam in March, students in levels 3 and up must successfully complete the theory exam in December.

Are there any age limitations?

There is no age limit for piano exams.

Who are the NMA teachers participating in AIM exam preparation?

Students can prepare exams with the following teachers: Mrs. Taylor, Mr. Spike, Ms. Pelin, Ms. Hintz, Mr. Kavanaugh, Mr. Hylland, Ms. Kamminski, Mrs. Gordon and Dr. Mihelcic.

How are the exams structured?

AIM exams are divided by level and content. There are specific technique, theory, and repertoire requirements for each level. Please consult your teacher about the exam level which would be most appropriate for your child.

Where are the AIM piano exams held?

The exams are held at different venues in Naperville. You will receive the location and the exam time information from your teacher, about a week before the exam. You will be able to request a specific day (if the exam is spread over several days) and the general time of the exam (such as AM or PM), and every effort will be made to accommodate your request.

Who adjudicates the exams?

Experienced members of The Music Teacher National Association from our area are the adjudicators.

Are there any extra fees for AIM exams and materials?

Yes, there is a participation fee of \$30 per student per exam for levels 1 and 2. Students taking exams level 3-11 have a \$25 fee for the theory exam, and a \$25 fee for the performance exam. For level 12 fees, please consult your teacher. The fees are due at registration, payable by check or cash. For payments by credit card on file please add an extra \$5 processing charge. There are additional costs for theory workbooks and performance exam books. Your teacher will advise you how to purchase the books.

How do I register?

You will be registering with your teacher directly or with NMA. NMA facilitates the organization of this program and processes the fees, but an individual teacher needs to be a member of MTNA in order to enter the students. Please see the fees explanation in the paragraph above.

Please let us know if we can provide additional information.

Talk with your teacher at your earliest convenience to set everything up and order the materials.
The sooner you sign up the greater the chance of the student's success at the examinations.