The Illinois MRSEC developed and implemented an 8-week program called “Musical Magnetism” that engages middle school students in materials science using the popular platform of music. The program combines engaging lessons and demos, researching a topic, turning that research into lyrics, and recording a song. 35 8th graders at Franklin STEAM Academy participated.

Faculty led lessons, developed with teachers, that included hands-on demos to teach about materials science and magnetism. Students and postdocs led activities, tours, and demos. Students and teachers from Franklin also visited the MRSEC and Materials Research Lab, where they used instruments like the SEM and x-ray diffractometer, enjoyed VR activities, and suited up for cleanroom tours. The program culminated with a listening party to share the songs they wrote about magnetism.

The I-MRSEC plans to run the program again at Franklin in the 2019-2020 academic year.