

Clifton Elementary Instrumental Music Department

Jason Leshowitz – District Supervisor of Visual & Performing Arts

Elementary Instrumental Instructors: Wes Krygsman, Frank Romaine, Ernie Kovatch, Ron Garofalo, Lauren Chen, Chap Ostrander, Tina Kang, Shang Lee, and Theresa Kemp

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Each year students anxiously await their turn to join our instrumental music program. Learning to play a musical instrument can be one of the most enriching of all school experiences, resulting in both academic and social benefits. Studies have shown that playing a musical instrument can help boost standardized test scores by as much as 50 points and math and reading skills by as much as 20%. Any child can learn to play a musical instrument as long as they demonstrate a measurable level of commitment and dedication. Clifton Public Schools has experienced music teachers to help your child develop their individual musical talents to achieve success.

Recently your child attended an instrument demonstration assembly provided by the district music faculty and (professional clinicians sponsored by Music & Arts Center). Your child was able to see and listen to the band and orchestra instruments that he/she may want to learn next fall. Parents often ask which instrument is best for their child. Generally, your child's own choice is the best choice, but please understand that one's individual physiology might indicate a different choice. Music teachers will help assess each student's aptitude for a particular instrument and will recommend instrument selection based upon your child's best chance of success. Each student's progress is constantly evaluated, and opportunities for instrument switching will be considered on an individual basis.

On page 2 is information you need to know regarding participation in the instrument program and on page 3 is the mandatory enrollment form. **Please read all information thoroughly and return all requested forms to your child's classroom as soon as possible.**

The deadline for the Enrollment Form is the first Friday in June

Music & Arts Center services the district weekly for repairs and supplies, and is a company with an excellent reputation. **If you choose to go elsewhere to either rent, buy, or obtain an instrument, you must consult with your child's instrumental music teacher first.** We strongly encourage renting an instrument as your child begins our program. If you decide to purchase instead, please be cautious and do your research first. Unless you are renting or buying from a reputable music store, there is no guarantee that you will be receiving a good quality instrument. Please eliminate a potentially frustrating learning experience for your child and obtain an instrument which will last them through the years.

Please feel free to contact us (see page 2) at any time should you need help or advice.

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

During the course of the first few weeks of June, return your child's sign-up

Each child will find out which Instrumental Music Form instrument he/she will play to his/her music teacher.

We look forward to the start of an exciting musical journey next year in all Clifton schools!

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The following information is provided so that you will have a clear understanding of how our program operates, and what is expected of your child when he/she enrolls.

Eligibility: Any child entering 4th grade or higher may sign up for the beginning instrumental program. We will be starting lessons as soon as possible after school resumes in September.

Instruction: Instruction will be given on all band and string instruments. Music students will be given a group lesson once per week, usually on a rotating schedule, and will participate in band or orchestra rehearsals as scheduled throughout the year. Beginning students will have their first “informance”/performance in February during the day where parents may attend. It will be held at their receiving middle school. They will perform in their school’s Spring Concert for an evening performance.

Instruments: Beginning students may choose from the list of instruments. **In order to ensure your child’s progress, you need to have a good quality instrument that is also in good working order.** If you obtain an older or used instrument, we advise taking it to a repair shop to assure it is in good working order. **Parents are responsible for providing the instrument.** In cases of financial hardship, contact Jason Leshowitz, District Supervisor of Visual & Performing Arts at 973594-4199.

Commitment Policy: The Clifton instrumental program is designed to nurture both individual character development, as well as team building skills. Ensembles are designed so that each member contributes to the overall group dynamic. **For these reasons, we highly recommend that each member join with the intention of participating for the entire school year.** The spring concert is the culmination of an entire year of all these valuable skills.

Rentals: The district approved instrument rental plan is available to you in a variety of ways:

- ☐ Visit Music & Arts Center 762 Route 17 North Paramus, NJ 07652 201-444-9800 (select prompt #2) ☐ Rent Online @ musicarts.com ☐ Mail in Rental Form

PLEASE REMEMBER – DO NOT RENT, PURCHASE, OR OBTAIN AN INSTRUMENT UNTIL YOUR CHILD’S CHOICE IS APPROVED BY AN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TEACHER. YOUR CHILD’S SUCCESS IS OUR ULTIMATE GOAL!

Teacher Contact Information:

Lauren Chen (Band) #1 – lchen@cliftonschools.net Ron Garofalo (Band) #12 – rgarofalo@cliftonschools.net Ernie Kovatch (Band) #15 – ekovatch@cliftonschools.net Wes Krygsman (Band) #3, 4, 5, 13 – wkrygsman@cliftonschools.net Chap Ostrander (Band) #3, 4, and CCMS costrander@cliftonschools.net Anthony Lanzerotti (Band) #2 -alanzerotti@cliftonschools.net Shang Lee (Strings) #3, 4, 11, 15, 17 – slee@cliftonschools.net Tina Kang (Strings) #1, 5, 9, 13, 14, 16 – ykang@cliftonschools.net Frank Romaine (Band) #8, 14, 16 – fromaine@cliftonschools.net Theresa Kemp (Strings) #2, 8, 12 – tkemp@cliftonschools.net