



# HHH MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

## Elementary School

All Half Hollow Hills students receive classroom music instruction from Kindergarten through grade 5. The curriculum in the elementary grades focuses on the development of listening skills as well as fine and gross motor skills. Instruction is sequential and provides both aural and visual reinforcement of mathematical and language arts concepts.

### Grade 3

The regular classroom music curriculum adds instruction on the recorder (a small woodwind instrument) to enhance the development of listening and motor skills. In addition, a small number of students may be given an opportunity to begin the study of a string instrument during the second half of their third grade year, based on string teacher availability. Consideration for this early program is given to students that....

- Express a real desire to perform on a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, string bass)
- Demonstrate an advanced level of ear training in the K-3 classroom music program.
- Are capable of maintaining excellent academic grades while taking part in a weekly “pull-out” lesson.

The third grade initiative was introduced to districts throughout New York State to encourage participation in orchestral programs. It is intended to give young students a head start on instruments that are very difficult to master. Participation during the final semester of the third grade year may enable students to participate in the orchestra earlier in the fourth grade year. It is only for those students that want to play a string instrument and is **NOT** to be considered a **PRE-BAND** instrument.

## Grades 4 & 5

All students in the fourth and fifth grades may participate in the school chorus. They may also begin the study of an instrument. The classroom music teacher will introduce chorus opportunities in class. In addition, the orchestra and band teachers will make presentations to all third grade classes during the spring semester. These will be repeated in early September for grades four and five. At that time, students may choose to begin the study of any of the following:

Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Saxophone, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Percussion, Violin, Viola, Cello, String Bass.

Once students indicate primary and secondary choices, the teachers review the requests considering the following:

- Student's ability to match pitch
- Student's ability to reproduce or imitate demonstrated motor skills
- Physical considerations (i.e.: the size and/or physical attributes of the child relative to the proportions of the instrument – mouthpiece, bow, case, etc.)

Once your child achieves a certain proficiency level on his/her instrument, he/she will perform with the school's band or orchestra. Rehearsals are held twice each week and may be scheduled both before and after school. The music teachers announce and post these schedules. Students that wish to participate **must** attend rehearsals and prepare the music.

At all grade levels, participation in winter and spring concerts will depend upon demonstrated ability, effort, attendance and progress.

### Rewards

Performing with the school chorus, orchestra or band is an honor. Participating students have achieved a high level of skill development. Concerts are special showcases presented to display student accomplishment to family and friends. All students will be expected to dress appropriately for concert presentations. **Jeans and sneakers are not appropriate for these evening events.** This is a time to be recognized for doing something special. We expect parents and students to take a special pride in their appearance.

## Selecting the Right Instrument

Each student should choose an instrument based on his or her individual interests. No child should request an instrument because “that’s what my friends are playing”. The success each child realizes will result from the commitment he/she makes to the instrument requested.

During the selection process, teachers will attempt to guide children. When the teacher feels a student will be unsuccessful with his/her primary choice of instrument, the teacher will make every attempt to direct the student to an instrument that will be more suited to his/her demonstrated abilities. This will be done with parental input.

### Cost Considerations & Instrument Availability

Students choosing the flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, violin, viola, cello and percussion, must have access to these instruments. They may be rented or purchased at local music stores. (A list of local vendors is given to all students interested in the program.)

Approximate costs are:

| <u>Instrument</u> | <u>Rental (Sept. – June)</u> | <u>Purchase Price*</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Flute, Clarinet   | \$90 - \$105                 | \$400 - \$450          |
| Alto Saxophone    | \$175 - \$190                | \$875 - \$900          |
| Violin, Viola     | \$85 - \$125                 | \$400 - \$600          |
| Cello             | \$175 - \$190                | \$900 - \$1500         |
| Snare Drum Kit    | \$50 - \$75                  | \$135 - \$150          |
| Trumpet           | \$105 - \$115                | \$400 - \$450          |

- Prices shown are an approximate amount for student line instruments. Finer quality instruments will be more expensive.

## District-Owned Instruments

The district owns and maintains a number of the most expensive instruments. These are provided at **NO COST** to students. Parents are, however, responsible for loss of or damage to an instrument while it assigned to their child. These instruments include the oboe, bass clarinet, bassoon, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, French horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba and string bass.

If you should ever decide to rent or purchase one of these instruments, the following is an approximate cost list:

| <u>Instrument</u>  | <u>Rental (Sept- June)</u> | <u>Purchase Price*</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Oboe               | \$175 - \$200              | \$1,100 - \$3,000      |
| Bass Clarinet      | \$175 - \$250              | \$ 800 - \$3,000       |
| Bassoon            | \$200 - \$250              | \$2,600 - \$4,000      |
| Tenor Saxophone    | \$195 - \$250              | \$850 - \$1,200        |
| Baritone Saxophone | \$300 - \$350              | \$1,700 - \$3,500      |
| French Horn        | \$275 - \$300              | \$1,400 - \$2,600      |
| Trombone           | \$105 - \$175              | \$350 - \$850          |
| Euphonium          | \$275 - \$350              | \$900 - \$1,200        |
| Tuba               | \$350 - \$400              | \$2,500 - \$4,500      |
| String Bass        | \$350 - \$450              | \$1,300 - \$2,500      |

\*Prices shown are an approximate amount for student line instruments. Finer quality instruments will be more expensive.

### Policy

District policy permits us to provide the above instruments for the first year of study **only**. Once a child makes a commitment to an instrument, it should be rented or purchased. However, due to the cost, we attempt to provide equipment for more than the first year of study whenever possible - with no guarantees!

## Commitment

### Instrumental study involves commitment on several levels:

- **Lessons**

Students will be involved in a “Pull-Out” lesson program for as many years as they study instrumental music in our district. Parents and students must understand that the student is responsible for class work missed during these music lessons.

- **Rehearsals**

Once skills are developed and the student is capable of playing the orchestra or band music, attendance at rehearsals is required each week.

- **Practicing at home**

No student is able to develop his/her talents without practicing at home. This is “homework” and is assigned at every lesson. Students must expect to practice 30 – 40 minutes per day, 5 days per week. Parents will be asked to help monitor this important, reinforcement process.

## Middle School

The first change your child will realize is that **GRADES COUNT**. Orchestra, chorus, band and Music Exploration are regular classes that meet on alternate days at each grade level. The grade your child earns is included in his/her quarterly and final averages. Expectations also change. The music is substantially more demanding than that presented in the elementary school. Technical growth and skill development become the goal of each lesson. New notes and more complicated rhythms are taught. More intricate harmonies become part of the ensemble repertoire. Reading skills become much more important.

Individual effort, reinforced by daily practice at home, remains very important. As a result, pull-out lessons continue to be critical to the progress of each student, and are part of the instrumental and choral course requirements. Focus on maintaining the academic average is carried into the new school setting. While the schedule is formulated to minimize absences from other classes each semester, attendance at the lessons is critical to each child’s success.

## **Middle School Additional Opportunities**

Extra-curricular ensembles exist in both middle schools. Students may audition for and perform with groups such as a jazz band or the school musical. These activities are scheduled outside the regular school day. A strong commitment to the rehearsal schedule is required. Choral students may also participate in the Jazz Band if they play piano, guitar, bass, etc.

## **High School**

Music classes reach their highest degree of challenge and expectation in grades 9 – 12. Literature for all ensembles (orchestra, chorus, and band) is selected from standard repertoire sources. Technical skills must be at their highest levels to successfully negotiate these demands. Students wishing to perform in instrumental and vocal ensembles are now able to schedule both. Depending on student interest and enrollment, a guitar ensemble may also be available.

In addition, Music Theory I and AP Music Theory are introduced to the curriculum. Students that master this course sequence in high school often “test out” of Theory I in college. Music in Our Lives, an extension of middle school general music, is offered to students not participating in performance ensembles. Music Recording and Production Technology is available to any high school student in the music program. State-of-the-art music labs are available to students for the above courses. Musical Theatre, Performing Arts for Social Justice, Guitar Fundamentals I, and Guitar Fundamentals II are also offered as half-year electives. Students also may consider working towards a Distinction or Advanced Distinction in the Music Conservatory (see Music Conservatory tab).

All courses meet daily and are part of the regular class schedule. Rotation lessons continue for performance ensembles. A flexible attendance policy is in effect regarding rotation lessons due to other academic consideration. However, all students are required to attend regular lessons. Opportunities exist before, during and after school to make up missed time.

The New York State Education Department requires each student to earn a minimum of one credit in Art or Music during his/her four year high school experience. All ensembles (orchestra, chorus, band and guitar) and the course Music in Our Lives may be used to fulfill this requirement. In addition, a credit sequence is available in music that may be used to achieve other State Education Department requirements for graduation.

## **Literature**

Literature to be performed is chosen from a number of approved sources. Students will be exposed to works of the great masters including Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, as well as contemporary composers. Some of this literature contains text from the scriptures and other religious documents. Parents must be aware that this is a part of our culture. However, no musical literature is ever presented in a religious context. All music is selected for its artistic and aesthetic value only.

## **Options and Rewards**

In addition to performing with our own ensembles, students are encouraged to participate in a number of solo evaluation festivals. The New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) sponsors a solo and ensemble festival for our students each year. As a result of these festival auditions, students may be invited to perform with the elite All-County ensembles at all levels, and All-State, All-Eastern and National ensembles at the high school level. Participation in a quality school music program is looked upon favorably during college application reviews, especially when All-County, All-State or All-Eastern accolades are involved.

The rewards of participating in a strong program are many. The self-esteem realized at the conclusion of an excellent performance is important during all years. Recognition of student talent and providing opportunities for our musicians are two very important aspects of the Half Hollow Hills Music Department activities.

When faculty and parents comment that we (the music staff) only work with the best, most successful students, we merely respond, "We know". The best part is that anyone can be a successful music student in Half Hollow Hills Schools.