

# **ANNUAL REPORT DRAFT V. 3.0**

## **COVER LETTER**

DATE:

TO: School Board members

FROM: Ellensburg Music Coalition

SUBJECT: Ellensburg School District Annual Report on Music Education

Thank you for taking the time to review our first annual report on Music Education K-12 in the Ellensburg School District. The newly formed Ellensburg Music Coalition is a community-based advocacy group that has worked closely with all of the music teachers in our district to provide the data for this report. We see this as a way of providing some basic information to establish the current state of music education.

Do we need a music coalition when music education seems to be thriving in our district? Yes, since we can't take that support for granted. We understand there will always be tough budget decisions and with the focus on state testing requirements, music education is often perceived to be a non-core requirement, making it vulnerable to reductions of time allotted, dollars allocated, or other essential resources needed to maintain the programs' high quality.

The coalition is open to community members, teachers, administrators, parents, and anyone who is passionate about equal access to music education for all kids. The current goal is to publicize our existence and educate our community on our principles and mission and the district budget/decision process. We'll know that we've established ourselves as a credible, well-informed, student-focused organization when decision-makers seek our input when determining the impacts of their decisions before making any changes affecting music education.

There will be an opportunity at a future board meeting for our coalition to answer any questions, address concerns or hear comments from you regarding the content of the report or our coalition.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Snedeker  
Ellensburg Music Coalition

CC: District Superintendent, Music Teachers

**Ellensburg School District State of Music Education  
Annual Report of the Ellensburg Music Coalition  
May, 2013**

**SUMMARY PAGE**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this annual report is to keep the Ellensburg School District administration and school board informed about the activities and the importance of its music programs.

**Ellensburg Music Coalition:** A community-based advocacy group focused on promoting music education in the Ellensburg School District. Community members and music teachers across the district serve as critical partners in creating a positive environment for maintaining and building music programs for students K-12.

**Coalition Mission:** To ensure **equal access** to quality music education for all K-12 students in the Ellensburg School District.

**Coalition Principles:** Our coalition is built on the following principles:

- Our coalition is student centered—it is focused on the impact of any decision on local students.
- Our coalition’s focus is on music education as a unified, district-wide effort – it is not focused on individual schools, specific programs, or music directors.
- Our coalition is a community-based organization committed to creating long-term positive relationships with the key decision makers affecting music education.

The primary goals of the coalition are to support music in the school district curriculum, and to promote access to music in the curriculum for ALL students. Additional goals include:

- To promote a balanced curriculum that treats music as an equal, not in competition with other subjects.
- To recognize and share information about the positive contributions of our school music programs to our children and our community.
- To inform school board members and school administration on district-wide issues related to music.
- To have an ongoing, long-term focus on music in the curriculum.
- To present an annual report to the Ellensburg School Board.

While music teachers will certainly help our coalition toward its goals, the energy and information comes from the community, as a reflection of its values. **It is NOT a fund-raising organization**, but will work with parent groups or booster clubs in support of school music programs.

**Coalition Membership:** Anyone who has a passion for music and believes all students should have access to music education.

### **Focus of this report**

1. A summary of the number of students involved in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular music education across our district in the three elementary schools, Morgan Middle School, and Ellensburg High School.
2. A summary of the performances and highlights of this year

### **Future goals**

1. The annual report will be presented at the end of each school year, growing in scope
2. The coalition will continue to work with district music educators to develop short- and long-term plans for music education K-12.

### **Resources**

The coalition plans to have a Facebook page and a website to publicize events, educate, promote resources, and communicate actions needed.

John L. Benham, *Music Advocacy* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2011)

Washington Music Educators Association: <http://www.wmea.org/>

National Association for Music Education: <http://www.nafme.org/>

## **Elementary Schools**

**Instructional Staff:** Each elementary school in the Ellensburg School District has a full time music specialist. In addition, a full-time district strings teacher has a part of her FTE assigned to elementary students (.2 out of 1.0). The primary responsibility for these teachers is delivering musical instruction to all students in each school.

**Leslie Schneider** teaches full-time elementary music at Valley View Elementary in Ellensburg. She previously taught in the Yakima School district as a travelling teacher in four elementary schools for three years and has worked in the Ellensburg School District since 1990. She graduated from LaCenter High School and studied piano lessons from Beulah Cheever for 9 years, participating in national and international piano auditions throughout high school. She won Clark County's piano solo contest in 1969 and was a featured soloist at her graduation and at a county-wide recital. Leslie received her BA and MA in Music Education from Central Washington University, with additional coursework at Clark College and Portland State University. In 2002, her 3<sup>rd</sup> graders won a \$10,000 contest from Oscar Mayer that helped stock her music room instruments, technology, and materials. She was named Ellensburg's Teacher of the Year in 2006. Her performance groups have been featured in MENC's World's Largest Concert twice, and once at the WMEA Yakima Conference. She was named WMEA's elementary music educator of the year in 2012 and she is currently serving as the WMEA Elementary East curriculum officer. She has two wonderful children, their terrific spouses, and five adorable grandchildren, all currently living in Ellensburg.

**Shanna Simonson**, Music teacher at Mt. Stuart Elementary, was hired by the Ellensburg School District in 2003. She grew up in a small town in Eastern Oregon. Shanna started taking piano lessons and voice lessons in elementary school from fellow Ellensburg S.D. music educator,

Carol Alldredge. She went on to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from Eastern Oregon University in 2000 and received her Master's in Education from Portland State University in 2003. Shanna met her husband Luke in choir, while attending Eastern Oregon University, and they now have two young daughters. Shanna enjoys spending time with her family, likes to play sports, and enjoys spending time outdoors.

**Carol Alldredge**, Music teacher at Lincoln Elementary, was raised in Seattle and started piano lessons in the third grade and voice lessons in high school. She went to Central and received a degree in Music Education, emphasizing vocal performance. She taught in Eastern Oregon for 4 years, as a high school choral director, K-6 general music, basketball coach, church choir director and also gave private piano and voice instruction. After a brief interlude in Canon Beach and Seattle, she went back to Oregon and was a substitute teacher and taught private piano and voice from her home while her children were small. In 1994, she moved with her family to Ellensburg. She then received her Master's in Education and reading endorsement and has been with the Ellensburg School District first as a substitute, also teacher private piano. She has spent the last 15 years at Lincoln Elementary, teaching general music K-5.

**Kara Hunnicutt:** See High School section

### **Class time for music**

NOTE: Elementary general music classes are used as a means to provide planning time for classroom teachers. As a result, opportunities for interaction between music specialists and classroom teachers are limited. Their schedules also work around reading blocks, math times, and other building priorities. They often work with the other specialists to allow classroom teachers maximum planning time and weekly scheduling that is as consistent as possible. They also assist in monitoring classes during assemblies or other programs as well as working with special education students, both mainstreamed and self-contained.

At Valley View (Leslie Schneider, music specialist), the class time is distributed as follows:

- Kindergarten: one class period per week @ 35 minutes
- Grades 1 and 2: two class periods per week @ 35 minutes each (total 70 minutes)
- Grades 3, 4, and 5: two class periods per week, 1 @ 35, 1 @ 45 minutes (total 80 minutes)
- Choir for grades 4 and 5 meets twice per week @ 40 minutes each (total 80 minutes)

At Mt Stuart (Shanna Simonson, music specialist), the class time is distributed as follows:

- Kindergarten: one class period per week @ 35 minutes
- Grades 1 - 5: two class periods per week @ 35 minutes (total 70 minutes)
- Choir for grades 4 and 5 meets once per week @ 50 minutes

At Lincoln (Carol Alldredge, music specialist), the class time is distributed as follows:

- Kindergarten: one class period per week @ 35 minutes
- Grades 1 - 5: two class periods per week @ 35 minutes (total 70 minutes)
- Music Club for grades 4 and 5: each grade meets once per week @ 35 minutes and once @ 30 minutes (total 65 minutes for each)

Elementary Strings: Kara Hunnicutt (.2 of 1.0 FTE)

- Beginning Strings (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> grades): three class periods @ 45 minutes each (total 135 minutes)
- Advanced Elementary Strings (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> grades): two class periods @ 45 minutes each (total 90 minutes)

### **Additional teaching assignments**

- Simonson (Mt. Stuart) – PLC monitoring every Tuesday; Shanna meets her fourth and fifth grade choir during PLC time. Shanna has safety patrol at the end of the day on a rotating basis. It is typically about once every seven days, sometimes more often. She has a performance with fifth graders every year in February for “Celebration of Cultures”. She also teaches camp songs to fifth graders and goes to camp for an evening to sing with the fifth grade students. Shanna also does a fifth grade talent show; students audition with her and then perform at the Mt. Stuart barbeque.
- Schneider (Valley View): PLC monitoring every Tuesday morning for entire school in the gym
- Alldredge (Lincoln): PLC monitoring. Tech Liason/Webmaster for the building— responsibilities in the building and attend tech committee meetings. Fifth grade camp (music and photography). School Fusion refresher course for faculty. Bus duty with second graders.

The three full-time elementary specialists are also compensated for up to 10 additional hours for time spent outside the contract day, e.g., for evening concerts, rehearsals/performance at county fair, etc.

### **Student Contact**

Average Elementary Class Size for Ellensburg School District: 22.6 students

Student FTE contact with Music Classes:

- Valley View: 405 students + 8 mainstreamed special ed students
- Lincoln: 457 students
- Mt. Stuart: 429 students

Participation in Choirs/Music Club (voluntary):

- Valley View Choir: 52 students
- Lincoln Music Club: 51 students
- Mt. Stuart Choir: 61 students

Participation in Strings:

- Beginning Strings: 31 students
- Advanced Elementary Strings: 5 students

Elementary strings classes are taught at Mt. Stuart, but students come from all three elementary schools: 7 from Valley View, 4 from Lincoln, and 20 from Mt. Stuart, in 2012-2013.

Elementary students participating in Music in the district by grade:

Kindergarten:	201
First grade:	221
Second grade:	222
Third grade:	226
Fourth grade:	222
<u>Fifth grade:</u>	<u>236</u>

TOTAL: 1328 (all elementary students in the district)

### **Curriculum choices and coordination**

Elementary teachers meet regularly and coordinate their curricula according to best practices, materials based on their professional assessment, and alignment with district, state, and national music standards (National Standards for Arts Education) and requirements. Materials include:

- “Game Plan” curriculum (including Orff-Schulwerk and Kodaly principles, among others)
- Silver Burdett curriculum and materials
- Quaver interactive website and DVDs
- Music Express (magazine subscription)
- Music K-8 (magazine subscription)
- Activate (magazine subscription)

### **Sample assessment activities:**

#### General Music:

- Written assessments that involve listening, writing and reading music notation; skills assessments involve steady beat, singing voice, rhythmic patterns, harmonic opportunities and instrument playing. Pitched and non pitched percussion assessments (formal and informal) are at every grade level, and recorder assessments begin in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- Some 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades are given a state music assessment in the spring
- The 5<sup>th</sup> grades are given a state listening assessment in the fall and a state composition assignment in the spring. Some 5<sup>th</sup> graders also are given the state CBPA-rhythm (rondo form-performing and writing) assessment.

Strings: Formative assessments daily in class, aurally. Summative assessments weekly in the form of Karate Strings, where students have to play 2-4 short pieces to earn their karate “belts” or ribbons.

Music classes support the curriculum in the whole building through reading, writing, mathematics, history, culture, and reinforcing patriotic ideals as citizens. Music can relate to any subject area.

## Co-curricular activities

Co-curricular activities include concert performances and other activities that involve entire classes or groups of students. Performances and other co-curricular activities at the elementary levels represent paths to independent musicianship and opportunities to share musical progress with the community.

One of the highlights for the entire community is the series of elementary Winter Concerts, held over several nights each December. Each school prepares its own concert programs, with each grade and school choirs/Music Club performing separately. In total, approximately 1300 students and their families participate in this important tradition. These and all concerts support the curriculum by showing parents music skills and concepts students are learning in music classes. The concert selections come from our music curriculum resources and align with state and national standards for music education.

In addition, the school Choirs/Music Club perform throughout the school year, including:

- Veterans Day assemblies (November)
- All-School assemblies (January, March)
- Exchange performance with all elementary groups at CWU
- Farmers Market (May)
- Kittitas County Fair

Valley View: Every other year, the Valley View Choir performs an exchange concert at CWU with the Yakima Children's Choir. In 2011-12, Valley View Choir was selected to participate in NAFME's concert for Music In Our Schools Month.

Mt. Stuart: Fifth Graders (68 students) perform at "Celebration of Cultures" in February every year. They learn 5 songs from different cultures around the world and then lead the students in their presentation of songs to parents.

### Strings:

- Three evening concerts during the year (November, March, May), featuring all five district orchestras (elementary beginning, elementary advanced, middle school beginning/intermediate).
- Annual elementary holiday concert; strings perform at one of the three elementary holiday concerts every year, rotating between schools.
- Each September, every 5<sup>th</sup> grader learns to play D String Blues, and improvise, on a violin/viola/cello/bass (some instruments borrowed from CWU's prep string program). Approx. 225 students; second week in September, during their elementary music classes.

NOTE: When performances are given during the school day such that music classes are missed, these classes must be doubled up and/or rearranged to accommodate the time missed.

## Extra-curricular activities

Extra-curricular activities are for those students who desire to go above and beyond the school day and want additional performance opportunities. Some of these children do not have access or financial means for private instruction, and these extra curricular activities provide an outlet for them that they might not get to experience otherwise. Their musical skills are given an additional chance to be “fine-tuned” and the extra time spent practicing in the music room leads to additional bonding with other musicians. Their self-esteem rises and their achievements and responsible behaviors are often reflected elsewhere.

### Valley View:

- Eight 5<sup>th</sup> grade students auditioned and one Valley View student, Gracie Luvera, was selected for the WIAA/WMEA All-State Youth Honor Choir in Vancouver, WA on President’s Day Weekend, February, 2013.
- The Valley View Choir auditioned for and was selected to be part of Music Express Video Mashup “The Song Of Life” shown on You-Tube this fall.
- There is an all-school talent show in the winter and the 5<sup>th</sup> grade talent show is in the spring, just before school gets out. The fifth grade talent show is run entirely by the 5<sup>th</sup> graders; the stage and sound crews and MC’s are all those students who audition for and are selected for the show.

### Mt. Stuart:

- Four students auditioned and one student, Alyssa Cox, was selected for the WIAA/WMEA All-State Youth Honor Choir in Vancouver, WA on President’s Day Weekend, February, 2013.
- Mt. Stuart 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Talent Show – performed during the Mt. Stuart BBQ. Any 5<sup>th</sup> grader that wants to can audition with a talent. Around 10 “numbers” are selected and those students perform at the BBQ. In the past, students have performed on piano, cello, violin, sang, yo-yo routine, a skit, a monologue, the “Macarena,” a clogging routine, and many more. Students also audition to be the M.C.

### Lincoln:

- In October, 25 children performed at the “Food Day” held at Hal Holmes.
- In December, Music Club performed at the morning Rotary Club and the noon Rotary Club meetings.(55 students)
- In February, one child auditioned and was selected for the WIAA/WMEA All-State Youth Honor Choir in Vancouver, WA on President’s Day Weekend, February, 2013.
- In June, 5<sup>th</sup> graders will put on the annual Lip Sync performance (70 or so children).

### Strings:

- December: Elementary strings class plays at the Valley View Elementary music program. 30 students.

## **Middle School**

**Instructional Staff:** Morgan Middle School offers elective classes in band, choir, and string orchestra. Two music teachers are full-time in the district, with their time split between multiple schools. The third middle school teacher has a total FTE of .7 at MMS, but only one class out of four in music (approximately .2).

**Don May and Kara Hunnicutt:** See High School section.

### **Kelly Moore**

**BAND:** Don May (.6 FTE at MMS for grades 6-8)

Beginning Band: (6<sup>th</sup> grade): 5 classes per week @ 45 minutes each (total 225 minutes).

Intermediate Band: (7<sup>th</sup> grade): 5 classes per week @ 45 minutes each (total 225 minutes).

Advanced Band: (8<sup>th</sup> grade): 5 classes per week @ 45 minutes each (total 225 minutes).

**STRING ORCHESTRAS:** Kara Hunnicutt (.4 FTE at MMS for grades 6-7)

Beginning/Intermediate Orchestra (6<sup>th</sup> grade): 5 classes per week @ 45 minutes each (total 225 minutes).

Advanced Orchestra (7<sup>th</sup> grade): 5 classes per week @ 45 minutes each (total 225 minutes).

**CHOIR:** Kelly Moore (.7 overall, .2 in music)

Choir (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade): 5 classes per week @ 45 minutes each (total 225 minutes).

**Additional teaching assignments/responsibilities**

- Hunnicutt: Hall monitor, daily, HSPE proctoring
- Moore: Drama, PE, Study period (.5 of .7 FTE)
- May: MSP/HSPE proctoring; oversight of Middle School Jazz Band, which is led by a CWU student who receives no compensation (no FTE)

### **Student Contact**

Average Middle School Class Size for Ellensburg School District: 24.7 students

Student FTE contact in Music Classes:

- Beginning/Intermediate Strings (6<sup>th</sup> grade): 19 students
- Advanced Strings (7<sup>th</sup> grade): 19 students
- Beginning Band (6<sup>th</sup> grade): 68 students
- Intermediate Band (7<sup>th</sup> grade): 53 students
- Advanced Band (8<sup>th</sup> grade): 26 students
- Middle School Choir (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades): 33 (16 + 17) students

Don May and Kelly Moore receive stipends for concerts outside the school day.

Total middle school students participating in Music in the district by grade:

Sixth grade: 99

Seventh grade: 91

Eighth grade: 48

TOTAL: 138 students (approx. 18% of school)

## **Curriculum**

The music repertoires for each middle school group are unique to the group, so the teachers construct their curricula individually, according to best practices, materials based on their professional assessment, and alignment with district, state, and national music standards (National Standards for Arts Education) and requirements.

Class time involves not only rehearsing music for upcoming concerts, contests, other performances, but a variety of individual tests and projects. Sample In-Class Assessment activities include:

**STRINGS:** Playing tests, writing original compositions, arranging music for their string orchestra or chamber music group, creating original music games, written self-assessments, learning Scottish fiddle tunes by ear, rearranging seating for balance and blend.

**BAND:** Students are graded through

- (1) playing tests alone in class from selections of music and specific music exercises;
- (2) Theory Tests (technical elements or the construction materials of music);
- (3) concert, band assessments/competition, and community performances are graded;
- (4) Class Participation;
- (5) Practice Card.

(6) After each concert and band assessment/competition, using an interactive adjudication form I created, students evaluate their own band's performance. At band assessment/competition, using the adjudication form, students are to assess two other bands.

**CHOIR:** Assignments reinforce the musical concepts taught in Sight Singing Books provided in the Choir Room, e.g., Solfege Singing, CBPA-Sight Singing Activity (Spring), Tests and Quizzes aligned with curriculum, Listening, Rhythm reading.

## **Graded Assessments**

All performances are graded activities, whether local concerts or at group contests and festivals. Trips to contests/festivals are treated as field trips. Specific activities include:

**STRINGS:**

- Three evening concerts during the year (November, March, May), featuring all five orchestras (elementary beginning, elementary advanced, middle school

beginning/intermediate (a mix of first and second year players in grades 6-7), middle school advanced grades 6-7, and high school orchestra grades 8-12).

- Both middle school orchestras attended Yakima Valley Music Educator Association (YVMEA) Regional Large Group Strings Contest for the first time this year, March 2013.

#### BAND:

- Four evening concerts during the year (November, December, March, June), featuring all three middle school bands (beginning, intermediate, advanced) and jazz band.
- Veterans Assembly (November)
- YVMEA Regional Large Group Band Contest (April)

#### CHOIR:

- Four quarterly Choir concerts (October, December, March, June)
- YVMEA Regional Large Group Choir Contest (April)

### **Extra-curricular activities**

Extra-curricular activities include musical activities involving students as soloists or elective participants. Often these activities include contests and competitions/auditions leading to additional awards and participation in honor groups, etc.

#### STRINGS:

- Strings/Orchestra students participate additionally in the CWU Prep Strings orchestras, community choirs, jazz bands, and more.
- Five students auditioned for Junior All-State Orchestra, WMEA regional conference, Portland, in February. One student was selected for participation.
- Middle school student string quartet performed for Honors Night (March)
- December--Middle school orchestras play holiday tunes for a community sing-along at Hal Holmes/Ellensburg Library. 38 students.
- February-- middle school string soloists and chamber music ensembles perform at YVMEA district/regional solo/ensemble contest.

#### CHOIR:

- February-- choral soloists and chamber music ensembles perform at YVMEA district/regional solo/ensemble contest. 12 students participated. All who participated received a score of I or II!
- Three choir students performed at an assembly singing acappella to Carrie Underwood!

#### BAND:

- Twelve middle school band students auditioned for Junior All-State Bands, WMEA regional conference, Portland, in February. Five students were selected for participation.
- February—Middle school band members entered in 23 categories, performing solos and chamber music ensembles, at YVMEA district/regional solo/ensemble contest.

## High School

**Instructional Staff:** Ellensburg High School offers classes in band, choir, and string orchestra. Two music teachers are full-time in the district, with their time split between multiple schools. The third music teacher has a total FTE of .6, all at the high school and all in music classes.

**Don May** received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Central Washington University in 1991, and returned to CWU for his Masters in Music Education which he completed in 1999. He has taught in Ellensburg since 1999. Prior to coming here, he taught middle and high school music in the Fife School District. He has been selected Teacher of the Year for the Yakima Valley Music Region (2006) and by the Veterans of Foreign Wars - Eastern Washington (2005), as well as Best K-12 Teacher of 2005, Best of Kittitas County. He is a solo and ensemble adjudicator around the state of Washington, and under his direction the EHS Band was one of twelve selected nationally by the National Music Education Coalition and Disney to attend the National Center for the Assessment and Adjudication of Musical Performance, April 2008. Don is very active in the Yakima Valley Music Educators Association, having served as instrumental representative, president, secretary, and currently as webmaster. He is also Director of Content and Scheduling, Ellensburg School District Television, Channel 16.

**Kara Hunnicutt** has been the director of Ellensburg School Orchestra program since its revival in 2007. Beginning with only 25 students, the program has grown to nearly 100 students in the district's five schools in the past five years, providing string education for students from second grade through twelfth grade. Conductor of the Icicle Creek Youth Symphony since 2011, Hunnicutt was the founder of the Icicle Creek Academy Orchestra in 2005, and also founded the music camp in 1988 that is now Icicle Creek Summer Symphony. She is the principal cellist of the Yakima and the Wenatchee Valley symphonies, the former since 1990, the latter since 1970. She taught orchestra classes in the Wenatchee school district 1999-2007, was on the faculty at Woods House Conservatory of Music in Wenatchee, and Icicle Creek Music Center in Leavenworth. Ms. Hunnicutt earned Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the University of Southern California, and a Master of Education from Central Washington University.

**Gay Ott** is currently director of choral activities in the Ellensburg public schools where she teaches grades 8-12. She received a Bachelor of Music Education degree and a Master of Music degree from Central Washington University. She has served on the faculties of Big Bend Community College and Central Washington University. She has performed and has recorded as the jazz pianist and vocalist with the Many Sounds of Nine, an ensemble that was active for over thirty years. Additionally, she performs as an oboist and English hornist with the Yakima Symphony. Gay has been selected Teacher of the Year for the Yakima Valley Music Educators Association. She is married to Hal Ott, professor of flute at CWU and she enjoys arranging music, accompanying, gardening, quilting, trying to keep up with her kids' many activities, and spending time with her family.

**BAND:** Don May (.4 FTE at EHS plus equivalent of .2 FTE added for Jazz Band)

Wind Ensemble (grades 9-12): 5 classes per week @ 55 minutes each. (275 minutes total)

Symphonic Band (grades 9-12): 5 classes per week @ 55 minutes each. (275 minutes total)

Jazz Band (grades 9-12): 5 classes per week @ 55 minutes each. (275 minutes total)

STRING ORCHESTRA: Kara Hunnicutt (.2 FTE at EHS)

Orchestra (grades 8-12): 5 classes per week @ 60 minutes each. (300 minutes total)

CHOIR: Gay Ott (.6 FTE + .1 FTE added for Jazz Choir, all at EHS)

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Choir: 5 classes per week @ 55 minutes each (275 minutes total).

Chamber Choir (grades 9-12): 5 classes per week @ 55 minutes each (275 minutes total).

Symphonic Choir (grades 9-12): 5 classes per week @ 55 minutes each (275 minutes total).

Jazz Choir (grades 9-12): 3 classes per week @ 60 minutes each. (180 minutes total)

Additional teaching assignments

- Hunnicutt: Hall monitor, daily, HSPE proctoring
- Ott: CCR, Senior Project
- May: Additional stipend received for marching band and pep band, which have been part of this position for the last 50 years.

### **Student Contact**

Average High School Class Size for Ellensburg School District: 24.3 students

Student FTE contact in Music Classes:

- Wind Ensemble (grades 9-12): 26 (15 fr/8 so/2 jr/1 sr) students
- Symphonic Band (grades 9-12): 25 (1/10/6/8) students
- Orchestra (grades 8-12): 24 (5/13/6/1/1) students
- Chamber Choir (grades 10-12): 14 (2/8/4) students (9 female/5 male)
- Symphonic Choir (grades 9-12): 22 (17/2/1/2) students (19 female/3 male)
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Choir: 17 students

Students participating in Jazz Band and Jazz Choir are in one of the other large groups

- Jazz Band (grades 9-12): 16 (2/4/4/6) students
- Jazz Choir (grades 9-12): 20 (5/4/7/1) students

Total students participating in Music by year:

- Freshmen: 39
- Sophomores: 30
- Juniors: 16
- Seniors: 15

TOTAL: 100 (approximately 14% of the student body)

### **Curriculum**

High school teachers meet regularly, but because the music repertoires are unique to each group, they construct their curricula individually, according to best practices, materials based on their professional assessment, and alignment with district, state, and national music standards (National Standards for Arts Education) and requirements.

Class time involves not only rehearsing music for upcoming concerts, contests, other performances, but a variety of individual tests and projects. Sample In-Class Assessment activities include:

**BAND:** Students are graded through

- (1) playing tests from selections of music and specific music exercises. Through recording by tape, computer, cell phone recording, or playing testing alone in the classroom;
- (2) Theory Tests (technical elements or the construction materials of music);
- (3) concert, band assessments/competition, community performances are graded;
- (4) Class Participation;
- (5) Practice Card.
- (6) After each concert and band assessment/competition, using an interactive adjudication form I created, students evaluate their own band's performance. At band assessment/competition, using the adjudication form, students are to assess two other bands.

**CHOIR:** Vocabulary tests, part singing tests, rhythm drills, group assessment assignments, contests

**ORCHESTRA:** Playing tests, writing original compositions, arranging music for their string orchestra or chamber music group, creating original music games, written self-assessments, learning Scottish fiddle tunes by ear, rearranging seating for balance and blend.

### **Graded Concert/Contest Assessments**

Concerts and Contests are our primary group performance assessments, allowing us to demonstrate under pressure that which we have worked to accomplish in the classroom. Additionally, contests provide feedback from other professionals and give students perspectives on how our program compares with others.

**BANDS:**

- Four Concerts per year (October, December, March, May)
- EHS Veterans Assembly
- EHS Senior Assembly
- EHS Graduation ceremony
- EHS Baccalaureate ceremony
- CWU Wind Ensemble Festival (Wind Ensemble only)
- CWU Jazz Festival
- Yakima Valley Music Educators Association (YVMEA) Regional Large Group Contest
- Columbia Basin College State Band and Jazz Band Competitions

**CHOIRS:**

- Concerts (4 per year): 18 Jazz Choir students, 22 Symphonic Choir students, 14 Chamber Choir students—October, December, March, May. Students graded on punctuality, set-up,

performance, audience behavior, and teardown. They also do a self-assessment of their performance usually 2 days afterwards (we watch our video or listen to a recording)

- Contests: 2 for Chamber, 1 for Symphonic, sometimes 1 for Jazz Choir-- Yakima Valley Music Educators Association (YVMEA) Regional Large Group Contest, CWU Choir Festival (Chamber Choir only). Students graded on trip behavior, performance. We are adjudicated by a panel of 3 judges and are scored against a set standard. Students also do a self-assessment upon our return.
- Chamber/Jazz Tour (November): The choirs go on an annual tour to different parts of the state of Washington. In November 2012, 30 students went on tour to Camas HS, Union HS, Battleground HS, Mark Morris HS, Capitol Rotunda, Edmonds Community College. See report at the end of this document. Students are graded on punctuality and work ethic on the tour, performance, and audience behavior while others are performing. We evaluate upon our return and review what we learned from the tour, both from other schools as well as clinicians.
- EHS Veterans Assembly: If a group number is performed by the choirs, the performance will be graded.
- Jazz Contest: Jazz Choir, usually the Moawad Festival (CWU). Same as contests for concert choirs listed above.
- Evening On Broadway (October): Students all learn a Broadway opener, closer, and then either a solo or group number. All students in Chamber and Symphonic Choir participate in the unit, but some choose to perform only for class or in private (in a practice room for a video recorder). Students research their song, costume as needed, and assess their performance via videotape when finished.
- Jazzmas (December): All Jazz Choir students learn a Christmas song and perform it in a jazz style for a Christmas dance held at EHS. They must transpose if necessary, prepare the music for a full rhythm section, and perform a solo from memory. Some also choose to do duets or small ensembles; the entire Jazz Choir sings 2-3 numbers at the beginning of the show. Students are graded on set-up, performance of their solo and also of their group songs, and on tear-down.
- Jazz Dessert (May): Jazz Choir—same as Jazzmas expectations and assessment

#### STRINGS:

- Three evening concerts during the year (November, March, May), featuring all five orchestras (elementary beginning, elementary advanced, middle school beginning/intermediate – a mix of first and second year players in grades 6-7, middle school advanced grades 6-7, and high school orchestra grades 8-12).
- The top three orchestras participated in the YVMEA Regional Large Group Contest for the first time this year, March 2013. Ellensburg High School orchestra received the highest rating of all schools.

In the distant past, fees for all festivals, competitions, and street marching parades were covered by the district. Today, the costs are covered by the Music Building budgets for choir/band. These budgets were originally put in place for curricular expenses such as for sheet music. Costs for curricular activities such as contests and festivals have been pushed into these budgets, as well as costs for extra-curricular expenses such as fees for participation in the state solo/ensemble contests. These budgets have not been increased to cover these additional

expenses. Thus, the music budget must pay fees for Central Wind Ensemble Festival, YVMEA Large Group competitions, students auditioning for All State or All Northwest Band positions, Central Jazz Festival, and Columbia Basin College State Competitions.

One thing often lost in the details of performances is the amount of setup and teardown time involved in each, well beyond the planning and preparation of the event. Concerts, especially those stage in the gymnasium, require set up (2 hours) and tear down (1 hour). Contests require 4-8 hours outside of the workday, depending on how far the respective group needs to travel. Tours are usually combined with musical exchanges with other schools such that students assess their abilities in relationship to other groups, learn from clinicians, and to hear some great ensembles. Special events like Jazzmas and Jazz Dessert require the same or more setup/teardown logistics due to the additional technology involved. These events also have special value to the students because the focus also includes solo performances, increasing self-esteem and individual responsibility. All of these activities are integral parts of our curriculum.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

Extra-curricular experiences augment our classroom learning by allowing each student to explore their abilities beyond what is required of them. Some are ready for big challenges and so take on lead performance roles or organizational roles, while others choose to participate at a lesser degree. All benefit by being able to be individually challenged.

#### **BANDS:**

- Marching/Pep Bands
- Solo/Ensemble Contests—13 band students participated in 20 solo and ensemble categories at the district level; 9 won their category (or more than one) to make it to the state competition in 13 different categories.
- All-State and All-Northwest auditions and participation: 1 bassist selected (the only one) for All Northwest Jazz Band;
- February--High school bassist (Bob Bruya) selected to participate in the Grammys Jazz Camp.

Marching and Pep Band have a place in the school—it is a GREAT public relations tool for the school and our programs. However, they require extra time on the part of the director and especially the students. For example, pep band requires more hours than school days and falls solely on the band students of the district; see below.

- Marching Band requires approximately a total of 90 hours, including prep work. Students in Marching Band get .25 PE credit up to a maximum of .5.
- Football pep band requires 16-24 hours during the regular season; playoffs can add another 20-30 hours depending on location of games.
- Basketball pep band. The director is trying to limit the impact per student to 5 nights at 4 hours each during the regular season, 12 hours total for the district playoffs, 12 hours total for regionals, and then the same for state. The total time for this part of the position can push 200-230+ hours for me (equivalent to an additional .2-.3 FTE).

## CHOIR:

- Solo/Ensemble Preview Night (January)
- February--Solo and Ensemble Contest (all students are required to participate in a class version or can choose to do Solo and Ensemble) Approx. 20 actually participated in district Solo/Ensemble. YVMEA Winners/Alternates:
  - David Weidenaar: Baritone Winner
  - EHS Vocal Ensemble: Mixed Vocal-Large Winner (14 students)
  - Tom Harbaugh: Baritone 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate
  - Caralyn Cutlip: Soprano 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate
- Winter Musical: 12 of my 14 Chamber Choir students and approx 6 Symphonic Choir students participated
- Chamber Choir Retreat: 14 students. Retreats are normally weekend (Fri pm to Sat pm). All students expected to participate. We learn music (sectionals and group rehearsals), set guidelines and expectations for the year, and get to know one another as we begin our year together.
- Field trip to see *Wicked* in Seattle at the Paramount Theater: approx. 40 students attended
- All-State/All Northwest Choirs: 6 Students auditioned/3 accepted/2 participated

## STRINGS:

- Strings/Orchestra students participate additionally in the CWU Prep Strings orchestras, district musical, choirs, jazz bands.
- Ellensburg High School's concertmaster Quinn Price wins audition to be Seattle Youth Symphony's concertmaster
- Throughout the year, Ellensburg High School string quartet performs for community groups and events. This year, 4 events, 4 students.
- October--Auditions for All-State, All Northwest, and Junior All State Orchestras. 8 students audition. 1 cellist selected for All State Orchestra, 1 bassist selected (the only one) for All Northwest Jazz Band
- January--Ellensburg high school retreat at Icicle Creek Music Center, Leavenworth WA (26 students, grades 8-12) on Fri/Sat overnight
- February--High school and middle school string soloists and chamber music ensembles perform at regional solo/ensemble contest. EHS students took several top honors, and will represent the district at the WIAA/WMEA State Solo/Ensemble Contest in April:
  - Quinn Price, violin
  - Marcus Michel, viola
  - Garrett Snedeker, two categories: cello and solo piano
  - Small Ensemble: EHS String Quartet--Price, Abby Beck, Emma Neller, Snedeker
- May--Benaroya Hall's Ten Grands Festival – Ellensburg soloists and/or string quartet. 5 students invited to perform, based on state contest performances.

## Summary

First, more specific competition results:

1. Our concert and jazz bands competed in the Columbia Basin College Concert and Jazz Band Competition, April, 2013, Columbia Basin College, Pasco. Here are the results:

Ashley Higdon, (Morgan Middle School) also won an award for outstanding baritone sax solo.

High School AA Division

- Symphonic Band: Bronze Award
- Wind Ensemble: Gold Award

From the Wind Ensemble:

- Morgan Shiver: Outstanding Trombone Solo
- Ben Harbaugh: Outstanding Trumpet Solo
- Avery Garrett: Outstanding French Horn Solo
- Avery Garrett: Outstanding French Horn Section
- Morgan Shiver, David Weidenaar, Mackenzie Brown: Outstanding Low Brass Section
- Terra Skyles, Aryana Henthorne, Ryan Schwab: Outstanding Low Woodwind Section

Jazz Band: 2nd Place AA Division

- Morgan Shiver: Outstanding Trombone Solo
- Tom Harbaugh: Outstanding Tenor Sax Solo
- Garrett Snedeker: Outstanding Piano Solo
- Bob Bruya, Outstanding Bass Solo
- Garrett Snedeker, Bob Bruya, Kyle DeWitte: Outstanding Rhythm Section Overall AA
- Morgan Shiver, Ben Bottcher, Nick Whitney, Terra Skyles: Outstanding Trombone Section Overall AA

With the combination of the concert band scores and the jazz band scores, Ellensburg **WON** the **Outstanding Music Department Award** for the AA division.

Many bands at the competition didn't receive any awards. The AA division for Band included groups from Kamiakin, Hanford, West Valley (Yakima), Mountain View, Othello, Cheney, Gonzaga Prep, Mead, Bellarmine Prep. The AA division for Jazz included groups from Kennewick, Chiawana, Cheney, Gonzaga Prep, Mead, Bellarmine Prep, Mt. Spokane, Glacier Peak, and West Valley (Yakima).

2. 2013 State Contest, Friday/Saturday, April 26/27:

Solo/Ensemble Entries for Ellensburg High School

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>Room</b>
Friday	8:10 AM	Ellensburg HS String Quartet	Strings-Small	Music	175, Recital Hall
Friday	8:30 AM	Armstrong / DeWitte / Fulton	Percussion-Small	Music	174, Concert Hall
Friday	4:00 PM	Harbaugh/Stevenson/Garrett/Shiver/Weidenaar	Brass-Large	Music	150, Band Room
Friday	4:40 PM	EHS Vocal Ensemble	Mixed Vocal-Large	SURC	Auditorium
Saturday	8:00 AM	Kyle DeWitte	Timpani	Music	174, Concert Hall
Saturday	8:10 AM	Halee Harrell	Soprano-Alto Saxophone	Michaelson	103
Saturday	8:20 AM	Morgan Shiver	Trombone	Randall	115
Saturday	9:50 AM	Garrett Snedeker	Piano	Music	175, Recital Hall
Saturday	10:00 AM	Quinn Price	Violin	Music	150, Band Room
Saturday	10:10 AM	Ben Harbaugh	Trumpet/Cornet	Michaelson	106
Saturday	11:10 AM	Garrett Snedeker	Cello	Music	153, Choir Room
Saturday	11:50 AM	David Weidenaar	Baritone	SURC	Ballroom A
Saturday	1:50 PM	Marcus Michel	Viola	Music	150, Band Room
Saturday	4:10 PM	David Weidenaar	Tuba	Randall	118

State Awards:

- Quinn Price, solo violin, First Place
- Harbaugh et al Brass Quintet, Third Place

## Choir Tour Report

Greetings!

I thought you might enjoy a recap of our Chamber and Jazz Choir tour this year. We left on Sunday, Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>, at around 3:00 for 4-hour ride to Camas, WA, and on arrival, we were greeted by a group of Camas students who came to hang out and play some get acquainted games. We headed to bed a bit later than anticipated because the students were having so much fun.

After a short night (on the choir room and band room floors of Camas High School...), we were up early and enjoying an exchange with the Camas HS Chamber Choir, followed by exchanges with their Bass choir and then their Treble Choir. This is the director's second year at Camas, and the program is growing by leaps and bounds. We heard many pieces from Latin America, as that is the theme that the director has chosen for the year.

A short bus ride found us at Union HS, a very large school with a very healthy choir program. Although our Chamber Choir is small in comparison, we sing well in tune and communicate text well to our audiences. This is something that we have worked very hard on this year, and the comments from Union High School students and director were very positive.

After lunch and another brief exchange with Union's Treble Choir, we were off to Battle Ground High School, where we exchanged with both the BGHS Chamber and Vocal Jazz Choirs. Their director, Darcy Schmitt, is a long-time friend of mine, and an amazing teacher and clinician. She is also the legal guardian to a blind, autistic savant fellow named Brent, who can play the piano in any style you can imagine. He loves jazz, and plays for Battle Ground High School's jazz program. At the conclusion of our exchange, we enjoyed a lively jam session where some of our students mustered their courage and took their first public scat solo. After an incredibly productive vocal jazz clinic with Darcy, we gathered around the piano and listened to Brent play for awhile. Though difficult to converse with, he has an incredible sense of humor, and we were thoroughly entertained and amazed. Name a tune, name an artist, name a style, name a key, and he is immediately able to play what you request. I am certain that this was an experience that many of our students will never forget.

After filling our bellies at Rocky's all-you-can-eat Pizza/Pasta/Salad Bar/Taco Bar, we traveled to Mark Morris High School in Longview, WA (mind you, it is still Monday). We arrived around 8:30, again to a group of cheering students who welcomed us and helped us carry in our gear. We enjoyed about 1½ hours of games, hit the showers and bedded down (this time on the upper levels of the gym).

Tuesday morning started off with a 6:45 exchange with Mark Morris Vocal Jazz. (Their director, Brian Mitchell, was my first student teacher.) He is an excellent teacher; his vocal jazz group was very strong. It is such a treat for us to hear other good groups; we do not have this opportunity in our small world of Ellensburg. We also exchanged with the Mark Morris Chamber Choir. They, too, are very good, and I found some literature that will be fun to program for my choirs.

Off to the Washington State Capitol, where we quietly entered and circled the seal of the state of Washington in the rotunda. It is surprising how many of our students (and even some of the chaperones) have not been to our state capitol. Because it is solid marble, you can only imagine the acoustical treat that greeted our ears. We sang a short 20-minute program, beginning with "The Star Spangled Banner" and concluding with the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." As we moved through our program, we changed singing positions; our last couple of

pieces were performed from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor balconies with me directing down below. I am told that there is a 7-second echo in the rotunda, so our final chords rang and rang. Lots of smiles, and more than a few goose bumps...

From the Capitol, we zipped up to Edmonds Community College, enjoying an exchange with both the EDCC Symphonic Choir and the vocal jazz ensemble. *Soundsation*, as the group is known, is one of the three most highly respected vocal jazz groups in the northwest. We are so fortunate to have them so nearby. Their director, Kirk Marcy, is also a great teacher and clinician, and in a short period of time, we made some great improvements in our pieces.

We then headed to the Alderwood Mall for a couple of hours of dinner and shopping, and then headed for home. Thankfully, the weather cooperated, and we arrived back at EHS around 9:15 p.m. As you can imagine, the students were exhausted, and filled with new concepts and enthusiasm for their art form.

I am always filled with gratitude that our district and our staff support this kind of learning outside the classroom. The trip is funded entirely by our Choir ASB account, which means the students have fundraised for everything, including my sub while I am away. They always have a lot of fun, but you can be sure that they are great ambassadors of our school and community. They are friendly, engaging, and when it comes time to make music, they bring it to the table every time.

Thank you for supporting this opportunity to learn outside the box. It is a highlight of our choral year.

Respectfully,  
Gay Ott  
EHS Choral Director

### **Coalition Concerns for future study**

Retention/continuation rates: There are marked changes in music participation as students change schools (5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade; 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade). Next year, we would like to explore the possibility of surveying at least 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders regarding plans and reasons for continuing (or not) in music. This information would be gathered and kept anonymous, with statistics shared with the district teachers and administration.

Seniors in Music: Also, next year we would like to feature graduating seniors who are in music groups, their activities and their plans after high school—perhaps another survey or exit interview.

Costs for students: Over 40 Ellensburg high school students competed at the district (YVMEA) Solo/Ensemble Contest; the YVMEA district extends from Zillah to Easton, and includes Yakima schools, so being selected for the State contest is a high honor, comparable to being selected for state competitions in high school athletics. 15 EHS students won their instrument/voice/ensemble category and competed at the state level in April. One student was the First Place winner for his category (Quinn Price, violin), and one ensemble (brass quintet) placed third. Fees for students achieving State WIAA/WMEA Solo/Ensemble Competition by winning district Solo/Ensemble Contests, must be paid by the students if they want to participate. These are not paid by the school district. Similarly, 8 students who auditioned for All-State and All-Northwest (a regional/six state competition) were selected for all-star/honor bands, orchestras, or choirs. They did not receive any financial help from the district to attend these events (February, Portland). While this is an extra-curricular, the opportunities for students like these are similar to those achieved by school athletes. Perhaps district money could be allocated to support these activities that reflect so positively on our district.

Thank you for your time and attention. Music teachers are one of very few teachers in a district that work with our students over multiple years, AND have multiple grade levels in classes at the same time. It takes good teachers to make good music. The music of the Ellensburg School District is amazing—thanks to our music teachers!