



The Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra

Passionate performances. Masterful musicians.

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Sharing Notes, School Edition, Summer 2011

Clafin Hill says, "Music Trains The Brain."

The Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra would like to offer a few thoughts and words of advice to you now, as your child approaches that moment of thinking of taking up the study of music – a path that could offer immense enrichment, joy, discipline and scholastic reinforcement throughout their educational journey and life.

1.If your child expresses an interest in starting an instrument, encourage them!

2.Visit Barnstorm Music, or any music store, and ask them to allow your child to try the various string instruments, to see which one might be a good fit for him or her.

3.Once they receive their instrument in the fall and begin school group lessons, please be sure to help them set up a schedule of regular practice – no one can be successful at anything, without the proper investment of time and effort behind it.

4.Begin slowly at the beginning –4 or 5 short 15 minute sessions will help them to begin acquiring a familiarity with the instrument – shorter but more frequent practice sessions are infinitely better than one or two long sessions each week.

5.Encourage them with positive reinforcement – the sounds you will hear at the beginning may not be anything that sound like music!!! It is a difficult and sometimes frustrating endeavor, to begin to try to make beautiful sounds come out of these "alien" objects, but they WILL succeed with perseverance and support at home.

6.Be sure to attend school concert presentations, especially the wonderful "vertical" concerts that some Music department presents – concerts that present ensembles from every grade, and can show the younger students where they can also be in just a few short years.

7.Take them on occasion to professional orchestral and "classical" presentations, such as the Clafin Hill Symphony in our own community, or orchestra concerts at Mechanics Hall in Worcester or in Boston. (We have a wonderful family symphony concert series on various Sunday afternoons at Milford Town Hall). Students need to see and experience the "end product" in the music study they are engaging in – they will not see this on MTV.

8.ABOVE ALL AND MOST IMPORTANT: We cannot stress the importance of seeking out and engaging private instructors for your students from the very beginning.

9.We have a most excellent music faculty in the Milford Public School Music Department, and EXTRAORDINARY Support from the administration. The array of musical ensembles, styles and genres of music performance and even courses such as music theory and composition that are offered here in Milford would rival the curriculum of any Performing Arts School or Conservatory, however these

talented teachers cannot personally impact each and every student on a "one-to-one" basis. Your child will be more successful, and achieve greater personal satisfaction, success and self esteem, when they receive weekly private lessons.

10.You will have made a major financial investment in a musical instrument, which you are handing over to your child to learn to play – what parent would hand their child the keys to their car, without first investing in driving school instruction to insure their success?

11.Studies have shown over and over again, that the students in our schools that are engaged in the study of music are also as a group the highest achievers in academics and go on to greater success in their future endeavors.

We wish you the very best as you follow your children through their educational path. As a parent of a recent high school graduate and soon to be music education major at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, I can say that my sons have received the very best education I could have hoped for them, and that their participation in our music program in the public schools



Angel demonstrates the violin at Clafin Hill's Annual Instrument Petting Zoo.

had a phenomenal and nurturing aspect on their years in school and in the people they have grown to become.

You may call us at Clafin Hill at any time with questions or if you would like advice on any aspect of your child's future music education.

Paul Surapine

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