

Good morning,

Thank you for sharing this email. I will review your suggestions as we move forward and take our next steps.

Ray

On Mar 23, 2018, at 3:07 AM, Raquel Klibanoff <raquel@stanfordalumni.org> wrote:

Dear Dr. Lechner and Members of the Board of Education,

I have been meaning to write for months, but better late than never. I was pleased with many of the changes on the Band/Orchestra survey from October. It is definitely a big step in the right direction compared to the previous survey a few years ago, and asked many important questions that the earlier survey did not. However, there were a few serious issues with some of the questions in the survey that will make the answers very difficult to interpret, and therefore uninformative. I am glad that this was just a first step, and that others are planned.

The most important issue to be determined is whether Band and Orchestra should be offered as a Related Arts option during the school day or continue with their early-morning rehearsals. I was very happy to see this question asked directly of the parents, and asked in three distinct ways to try to clarify opinions. However, one very large problem is that it did not specify *which grades* they were talking about when asking the question.

From talking with dozens of parents, I would expect that the vast majority would support having Band and Orchestra as a Related Arts option in 7th and 8th grade. Those poor WJHS kids currently have to choose between losing an hour of sleep every single school day or giving up on playing in band. In contrast, the 5th grade band meets only one morning per week, and both parents and kids find this much more palatable than rehearsals in the older grades.

A parent answering the questions related to whether Band and Orchestra should be offered as a Related Arts option during the school day (versus continuing with their before-school rehearsals) would likely have different answers if they were thinking of a 5th grader or an 8th grader; this makes the answers to those survey questions extremely difficult to interpret accurately. For the parents who think that offering Band/Orchestra as a related arts option is a fantastic idea in WJHS, but maybe not for 5th graders, there was no way to indicate this on the survey, which is a very large problem because I think that describes many parents.

The vast majority of parents would prefer Band and Orchestra during the school day as a related arts option for 7th and 8th graders. If the survey results imply otherwise, I believe it is because of the unclear phrasing of the questions/options on the survey, and

that the parents indicating otherwise were thinking of 5th graders, not 8th graders. In future surveys, parents need to be asked separate questions: how they feel about Band as a Related Arts option at Highcrest, and how they feel about Band as a Related Arts option at WJHS.

If for some reason instrumental music at Highcrest and WJHS had to be the same, i.e., either all or none of the four grades needed to have instrumental music as a Related Arts option, I have a suggestion. Since WJHS Band and Orchestra students are expected to rehearse every day, that would be their only Related Art during the school day. However, for 5th and 6th graders, perhaps something could be done so that they rehearsed with band or orchestra during the school day in their Related Arts period two days per week, but went to a different related arts option the other three days per week. For example, during their Related Arts period they could have Band on Monday and Friday and Drama on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. I realize that this would involve some changes to the Related Arts curriculum and possibly some inconvenience to the Related Arts teachers, but I believe this would definitely be in the students' best interests and is absolutely achievable. This is if the Instrumental-Music-As-A-Related-Arts-Option had to be treated the same in Highcrest and WJHS; if that is the case, this option could be presented to parents in future surveys.

Again, I was very glad to learn that the October survey was just a first step. It was a good first step, and I'm hoping that the next steps will provide clearer options for the parents.

I'm really hoping that Band and Orchestra will be offered as a Related Arts option at WJHS by this fall, so that my daughter can participate. She's in 6th grade now, and I have been writing the Board about the problem of before-school band rehearsals since she was in 2nd grade. She is an enthusiastic flutist, but it is not in her (or any child's) best interest to give up an hour of sleep every morning. It would be very disappointing if WJHS continued to force kids to choose between adequate sleep and participation in their instrumental music program.

Thank you for taking this issue into consideration when interpreting the results of the October survey and with the design of future surveys, and for your continuing investigation of Band and Orchestra rehearsal times.

Sincerely,

Raquel Klibanoff