

July 1, 2012

Dear Bolton Central School Board of Education:

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the summer season! I write you today to make a formal request for the establishment of a "BCS Contemporary Music Ensemble" club, effective for the 2012-2013 school year.

It has been past practice that the current BCS jazz band meets in one of the following ways for rehearsals.

First, students in the scheduled Jazz Band elective meet. In the 2011-2012 and the upcoming 2012-2013 school years there were no students enrolled. Plus, a student does not need to be in the class to participate in jazz band (Also, in the coming school year we will be adapting that class to our students' needs and creating a new "musical alternatives" class in place of the jazz band elective).

Second, band members are pulled out of class for rehearsal on a need basis. This creates inconsistency and is incredibly inconvenient for the general education teachers.

Lastly, jazz band members are scheduled in a regular band lesson group, which is also taken from classes, but on a rotation of class periods. Although this way is more consistent, it takes the band members away from having a regular band lesson with their concert band section, where they can improve their skills and techniques on their instrument making for better overall musicians and a better concert band.

This past year, I used one of my planning periods to be able to put the jazz band into the lesson rotation, and also met several times after school to prepare for performances.

These ways of getting rehearsal time for the jazz band have worked to a certain extent, but I feel a more consistent rehearsal time would serve our musicians much better. The development of this club will give greater opportunity to improve not only the jazz band but the concert band as well and also affording more opportunity for the jazz band to perform in our community.

My proposal is to create a "Contemporary Music Ensemble" as a club. This club gives our instrumental music program the opportunity to give the jazz band ample rehearsal time and performance opportunity, while also opening up possibilities for other performance groups to emerge from our talented students. As a jazz ensemble we would meet for 1-hour rehearsals before or after the school day; whichever is best for the students and does not interfere with extra

or co-curricular and athletic programs. Rehearsals would be on a bi-weekly basis for each ensemble, unless more rehearsal time is needed to prepare for performances. This way, students will still receive their band lesson during the school day to better their musicianship, and will also be able to participate in an excellent jazz band. This club will also open opportunities for other contemporary ensembles to be formed; whether it's is a brass quintet, a clarinet or saxophone choir, or even a blues or rock band. With these possibilities, the club will improve student interests in music and give our school music program even more positive exposure.

I would still like to call the core of the club a "jazz ensemble" (to avoid confusion) as long as possible. But I feel that this club will allow us the opportunity to branch out for the needs and interests of our student musicians.

With myself acting as the clubs advisor I can direct the group(s) in rehearsals and give guidance on playing and performing. With rehearsals outside of the school day, I would be more able to focus on our excellent concert bands. As the club's advisor I am seeking remunerations at the contract's club rate of \$1,751.00 for the 2012-2013 school year, for the service of September through June each school year.

Jazz band as an extra or co-curricular club is common for schools in our area. However, having it encased within a contemporary music ensemble is rather innovative and will afford our student musicians more opportunities, now and in the future.

For more detail about the proposed program, please review the attached information.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. I truly feel this would be a huge step in the right direction for our students and our instrumental music program here at Bolton Central School.

Sincerely,

Chad M. Shippee

Instrumental Music Director

Bolton Central School District

“BCS Contemporary Music Ensemble”

Director: Mr. Chad Shippee

Mission:

1. To expose student musicians to the various styles of music, with an emphasis on Jazz and accompanying styles.
2. To maintain a group of student musicians that serves the local community through performance.

Membership:

1. Any band students in grades 9-12 are welcome to become members.
2. Any exceptional band students in the 8th grade are welcome upon invitation from the director.
3. A student wishing to form an ensemble within the club that is not the jazz ensemble must get approval from Mr. Shippee.

Member Commitment:

1. 1-hour rehearsals, bi-weekly, or possibly more, before or after school, depending on what works best for the ensemble members and does not interfere with other extra or co-curricular and athletic programs at BCS.
2. Availability for performances in the local community.
3. Members must attend all rehearsals and performances, unless granted prior excuse from the director.

Content Learned:

1. Experiencing various styles of contemporary music.
2. Improvisation skills.
3. Basic music theory.
4. Basic history of contemporary music.
5. Famous and important artists and musicians.
6. Techniques used in performing jazz and similar contemporary music.
7. Performance experience for local organizations and community members.

“BCS Contemporary Music Ensemble”

Performance List

- Westmount Health Facility: *2 performances* (December & May)
- Liberty House Foundation: February
- New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) – Empire State Plaza
 - Music in our Schools Month Celebration – March
- BCS Music Department Recital - March
- Trills and Thrills Music Festival – Various Locations – May/June
 - Judged Competition
- BCS National Honor Society Inductions - May
- Burlington Jazz Festival (upon invitation and availability) - June

With the possibility for more!

- Performances in Bolton.
 - Marshal or Veterans Park performances. (Fall or Spring)
 - Possible summer performances in town.
- Performing for other school events.
- Hosting other local school jazz bands and clubs for exchange concerts or jazz festivals.
 - I.e. North Warren, Warrensburg, Lake George, Corinth, Galway, etc.
- Attending relevant professional performances.