

Program 7: Making the Most of Community Resources
Music

SEGMENT 4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Carmen Laboy
 20 years teaching

About the School

Christopher Columbus H.S.
 Bronx, NY

Type:
 Urban/Comprehensive

Grades:
 9-12

Students:
 4,000
 Low/Middle socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:
 New York has a 1-credit art or music requirement (180 minutes per week for one year)

About the Instrumental Music Program

Faculty:
 1 full-time

Students:
 175

Facilities:
 Above Average in the Area
 • Band room
 • Instrument room
 • Multipurpose auditorium

Required Courses:
 None

Elective Courses:
 Beginner Band, Intermediate Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Pep Band

About the Featured Classes

Concert Band:

Students who have been playing an instrument for several years and are ready for an advanced band set-up join this group. Students can remain in Concert Band and play in Jazz Band at the same time.

Student Motivation:

High

Student Level:

Advanced

Jazz Band:

Students learn traditional Big Band and Latin jazz music, which is especially challenging rhythmically.

Professional jazz musicians who live in the neighborhood come in regularly as guest artists to play alongside the students, offering tips and coaching.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Students have been in Concert Band and are particularly gifted since there is only one instrument per part in Jazz Band.

Student Motivation:

High

Student Level:

Advanced

In the Teacher's Words

How do you prepare the professional musicians who sit in with your band? What do you ask them to do?

I talk to them about the kids before they come. These people have respect for my program and my students, and they are interested in helping young musicians – that's the continuation of the art form.

It's never about the professionals – it's about helping the kids. I don't have to point anything out – they notice the flaws and problems and what needs to be worked on. They work with their section on specific passages. They give specific pointers to the students.