Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year. We are very excited that Claremont Unified School District can continue to offer the Elementary Instrumental Music Program to all students in grades four through six. While we hope to be able to provide music instruction in-person soon, we will be providing virtual instruction to begin the year. This decision was made to ensure the health and safety of our students, and to reduce the risk of quarantine. As more information, and vaccines, become available, the music team will reevaluate the instruction model with hopes to move to in-person learning.

The following music instructors will be teaching in the program this year:

- **Lucas Critchfield** has been teaching music in Claremont since 2008, after relocating from Albuquerque, where he taught band, orchestra, percussion, marimba, and steel drums. He is an active performer with world music bands and his own group: *Marimba Tropical*. Mr. Critchfield holds a Bachelor of Music Education from the University of New Mexico and a Master of Music from New Mexico State University. He currently teaches Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Bands for the Elementary Instrumental Music Program, as well as the Yucaipa High School drum line.

- **Matthew Angel** has been a music educator and professional performer for almost 15 years. Born and raised in East Los Angeles he has tried to bring classical music to his town and give back to the community the gift of music. He is a Violinist for many orchestras in Los Angeles and has performed with well-known artist. As a teacher he is dedicated to changing lives of young people through music.

- **Jack Perry** has been a working drummer, composer, and educator in the Los Angeles area for over 10 years. Over the years Jack has been able to work professionally with artist like Nicole Mitchell (Downbeat and Jazz) Times labeled top flautist from 2004-2014) and Eddie Kramer (Jim Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, The Beatles). He also received a bachelor’s degree in jazz studies from the University of California Irvine in 2016. Jack currently teaches the Elementary Beginning Band, Percussion, Intermediate and Advanced Band classes as well as the El Roble Intermediate School Beginning and Advanced Drum Line.

- **I-Ting Huang** A native of Taiwan, I-Ting began her piano education around age 2 and had her piano solo debut at age 12. With the sudden passing of her beloved piano teacher, I-Ting devoted herself to music and chose viola as her performance major at the age of 17. One year later, she successfully auditioned for the New England Conservatory. She completed her Master’s degree in New York on scholarship and was awarded the young artist award from the LCU foundation. She later graduated with a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 2013. As an active chamber and orchestral musician, she has performed on many acclaimed international stages and participated in prestigious music festivals. As an educator, she has been a viola faculty and chamber coach at California Baptist University School of Music since 2016. She is new to the Elementary Instrumental Music Program in Claremont Unified School District.
• **Sandy Gomez** has been active as a private instructor at the Azusa Conservatory of Music teaching woodwinds along with private and section coaching at: Goddard Middle School and Sandburg Middle School (2016-present), Etiwanda HS (2017), Gladstone HS (2017-2018), Alta Loma HS (2018-present), Buddhist Light Youth Orchestra (2018-2019) and Temple City High School. Sandy has been a member of various ensembles including the LAMA Orchestra, The Big Five Orchestra, The Sierra Wind Symphony, Musical Theatre Orchestra, as well as Azusa Pacific University’s Symphonic Band, Studio Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra, and Wind Ensemble.

**Music Classes Start the week of October 4-8, 2021**

**It is not necessary for your beginning student to have an instrument and/or materials for the first class meeting.** However, if your student does have an instrument and/or materials, they should have them available at the class. Please refer to the relevant *Follow-up Information Sheet*, also posted online, for a list of materials and supplies needed for your student’s instrument. There are two separate follow-up sheets: one for band and one for strings. Instrument rentals are available through local music vendors and are listed on the *Follow-up Information Sheet* for your reference. These vendors are aware of the “quality standard” we require for our elementary instrumental music students; inferior instruments can make it difficult or even impossible for students to learn to play correctly.

**Claremont Unified School District has a limited supply of instruments to loan for student use.** *Availability is based upon financial need, which is usually verified by a student having applied, and qualified for, free/reduced lunch. It is sometimes necessary to offer beginning students their second choice of instrument if we have exhausted our supply of their first choice. If you have requested a District instrument, you will receive an email notification of your student’s instrument status. If your student has been assigned an instrument, the email will include the time and location for instrument pick-up. If your student has not been assigned an instrument, they will be placed on a waiting list.*

Your annual donation helps us to provide the resources necessary for this program to succeed, such as instruments and repairs, video production, sheet music, stands, and supplies. We appreciate any and all donations to the program.

Should you have any questions regarding the Elementary Instrumental Music Program, please visit: [www.cusd.claremont.edu](http://www.cusd.claremont.edu) and go to Parents tab, (Parent Resources and Links) on the left-hand side, you will see Elementary Music.

Thank you and we look forward to the 2021-2022 school year!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Natalie Taylor, Ed.D.
Director, Educational Services Intervention & English Learning Programs