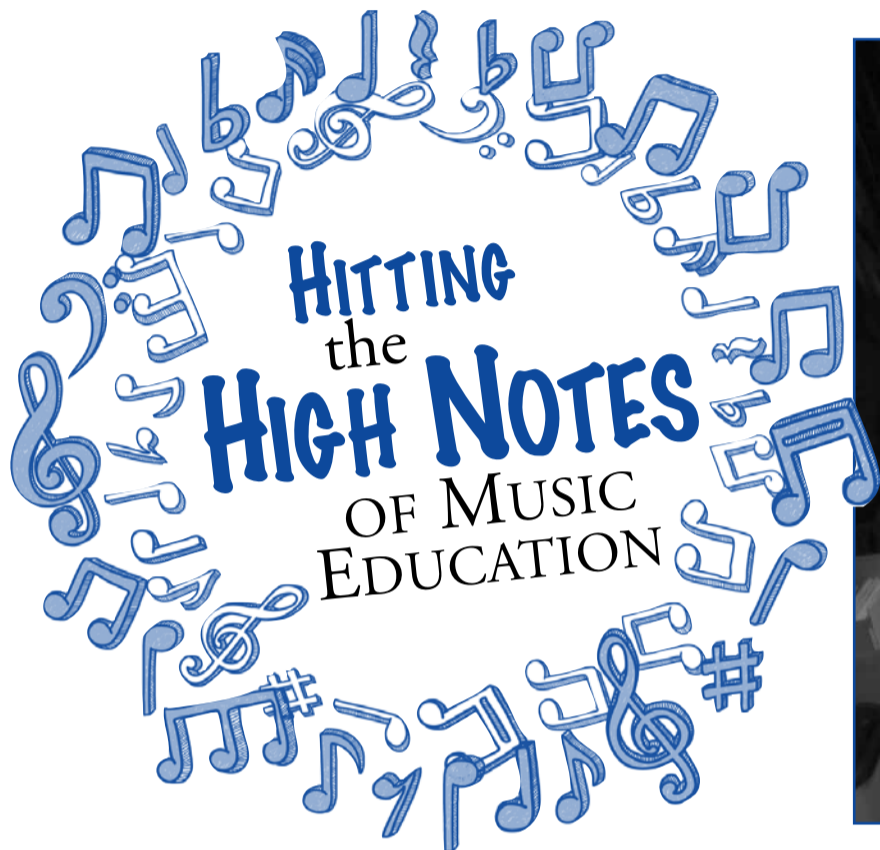




# COPIAGUE. Connections

COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS - A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

Spring 2016



The District takes pride in its comprehensive music program, which allows students to progress in their musical experiences at every level of their educational careers. Students can explore and grow in music education through performance ensembles, instructional courses and musical productions. Each year, students are selected to perform at elite competitions and music festivals with the top musicians in the county, state and nation, as well as at school functions and community events. Many students discover their passion for the fine arts through their involvement in music programs and pursue prestigious careers in the music industry upon high school graduation.

“Music is key to the Copiague experience,” said Fine Arts Coordinator Jennifer Pierre-Louis.

Beginning in kindergarten, students are introduced to the fundamentals in their general music classes. This includes learning basic music terminology and grasping the concepts of melody and rhythm. Once a student reaches the third grade, they are able to join a performing ensemble. They can select an instrument and begin exploring their abilities in the school band or developing their voices in the chorus.

Lessons from elementary school funnel into the middle school, which presents students with a broad range of musical learning opportunities. The school offers two choruses and three bands, each of which gathers every other day throughout the school year. Additionally, middle school students attend general music classes every

other day for half a year. The school also has three audition-based ensembles – the jazz band, wind ensemble and chamber chorus.

At the high school, students are challenged to achieve and perform their best through an array of performance opportunities and course offerings. Students at all levels can participate in musical groups, including select ensembles that require an audition. Beyond performing, students can enroll in music electives to further their knowledge. The high school has an active chapter of the Tri-M Music Honor Society, which supports department events and initiatives. Tri-M also meets twice a month to develop small ensemble repertoire and discuss issues in music education.

“Music education is an integral part of providing students with an outlet to express themselves, discover their passions and emotions, and explore new ideas, subject matters and cultures,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kathleen Bannon.

Students have the opportunity to showcase their musical talents

in various venues throughout the school year, including the middle school’s and high school’s musical productions, winter and spring concerts, holiday parades, the Fine Arts Festival, the Memorial Day Parade, the Amityville Day Parade, high school graduation and the fifth and eighth grade moving up ceremonies. Each year, exceptional student-musicians are selected to perform in the New York State School Music Association Solo, Ensemble and All-State Festivals as well as the Suffolk County Music Educators’ Association All-County Festival alongside the top student-musicians in the region and beyond.

“The courses and performance opportunities afforded to our students are of the highest caliber,” said Ms. Pierre-Louis. “If students are willing to dedicate themselves, they will find a stage to perform on, a classroom to learn in or a spotlight to shine in. Because of the continued support of our community, students, administration and staff, we can offer these great opportunities to our students.”

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- Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kathleen Bannon

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### Elementary Band

At the elementary level, students begin to explore their interest in playing a musical instrument. They meet during the school day for lessons. They can audition to join the elementary marching band, which consists of student-instrumentalists from all four elementary schools, to perform at the Fine Arts Festival and in the Memorial Day Parade. Students show off their skills at the spring and winter concerts.

### Elementary Chorus

Each elementary school has a chorus, which gives students an opportunity to explore singing and working cooperatively in an ensemble.

### Elementary Music Classes

Students are exposed to music in their weekly general music classes. They learn that music is an integral part of many core subjects and everyday experiences.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

### MS Bands

The middle school has three band ensembles with approximately 130 student-musicians in each. Members of the concert and symphonic bands develop both individual and ensemble skills while exploring band music in traditional and contemporary repertoires. More advanced seventh- and eighth-grade students are enrolled in the symphonic winds band. Students may also audition for the school's jazz band.

### MS Choruses

Students interested in developing their vocal abilities can enroll in the sixth-grade or combined seventh- and eighth-grade chorus. Each chorus averages between 150 and 230 members. Students can also audition for the chamber chorus.

## HIGH SCHOOL

### HS Choirs

The **women's choir** is an intermediate-level chorus for students with beginner-level music theory knowledge and prior singing experience.

The **concert choir** performs a challenging and rigorous repertoire of choral literature. This class is designed for students who are more advanced in music theory and vocal pedagogy.

The **mixed chorus** is a beginner-level course for students with no prior singing experience. The primary focus of the class is basic vocal pedagogy and beginner theory.

### HS Bands

Students can participate in the **concert band** or **wind ensemble**. The concert band is open to students interested in being part of the band program, while the wind ensemble is a select group with participation based upon the recommendation of the band director.

The **jazz band** is an audition-based extracurricular ensemble whose performance repertoire ranges from blues and big band to funk and fusion.

## SECONDARY MUSIC COURSES

### MS General Music Class

In the Music 6 course, sixth-graders review and expand on the fundamentals of music that were instilled in them at the elementary level. They begin to read notation, study different families of instruments and styles of music, and learn how to play melodies on several instruments.

Music instruction in seventh and eighth grade builds upon the lessons from previous years. Students learn to sight-read, compose their own instrumental pieces, and conduct research on different career and college opportunities in the field of music.

### HS Music Courses

**Music of the 20th Century** is a general elective that examines music of the 1900s by focusing on interdisciplinary studies. Students explore different genres of music by understanding the social concepts and implications of the historical periods in which they occurred.

The **Music Theory** course is for students in the music program and those with a music background who would like to broaden their knowledge in music theory, harmony, sight-reading, and analysis of music history and literature.

## HIGH SCHOOL

### HS Marching Band

The marching band is the high school's most public performing instrumental group.

Students may participate in the woodwind section, brass section, pit percussion section, drumline or color guard. This is the most rigorous instrumental activity at the high school, with nearly 50 rehearsals between the months of July and October.

## HIGH SCHOOL

### HS Madrigals

As the most advanced and elite chorus at the high school, students must audition to become a member of the Madrigals, which features about 60 students. As a competitive choral group, they have received high rankings in various competitions.



# A MIX OF MUSIC, ACTING and DANCING

Each year, the middle school and high school bring to the stage a full musical production with costumes, music, acting, dancing and more. Averaging more than 100 students for each of the productions, students play an integral role in bringing the shows to life through their participation in stage crew — which includes lighting, sound, stage management, props and set design — as well as their assistance with costumes, makeup and hair.

In November, the middle school put on its production of “Cinderella,” directed by Kaitlin Schneekloth. From the start of the school year, students rehearsed every day after school and on some Saturdays leading up to the show. In years past, the middle school has performed “A Year with Frog and Toad” and “Schoolhouse Rock.”

Directed by Gina Occhiogrosso, the high school brought its production of “Young Frankenstein” to the stage in March. Students auditioned for the lead roles and

were responsible for practicing music, memorizing lines, dancing and stage blocking. Those involved in the shows are given a hands-on experience with the technical and creative aspects of theater. Among the high school’s repertoire of productions are “Godspell” and “Hairspray.” Each year, theater students are invited to attend the Babylon Citizens Council on the Arts’ Teen Theatre Awards, where they have received awards in categories such as best musical and best choreography. Students interested in furthering their education in theater can enroll in the high school’s beginner and advanced drama classes.

Additionally, students who enjoy music and dancing can join clubs at the elementary and secondary levels. Students at Susan E. Wiley can become a Wiley Dancer. The Wiley Dancers perform in their own show and at school functions. This past December, they showcased their talents at the District’s Board of Education meeting.



High school students can join the Hip Hop Club and Step Team. Members of the Hip Hop Club put on an original production that they choreograph and script. This year, they performed in the school’s Black History Month show and at the March Board of Education meeting. The Step Team, also known as the Lady Steppers, performs at various school events, including homecoming, the homecoming pep rally and the Black History Month show.

## Celebrating a Strong, Connected Community

Continuing their tradition of hosting local community members and politicians for a Saturday morning breakfast and State of the Schools, the Board of Education and administration held their annual community summit, “Our Schools, Our Community: A Strong Connection,” on March 5.

“The summit is an opportunity for us to celebrate the success we’ve had, discuss some of the issues we face in the upcoming budget and collaborate on ways we can make things better,” said Board of Education President Brian J. Sales.

During his speech, Mr. Sales focused on educational funding and thanked New York State Assemblywoman Kimberly Jean-Pierre and New York State Sen. Michael Venditto for their efforts in supporting Copiague, including the additional funds they’ve secured for District students and programs. He also discussed the various ways in which the Board is connecting with Copiague’s students, including attending Board Day at school and hosting high school students in roundtable discussions.

Overseeing her first summit as superintendent of schools, Dr. Kathleen Bannon focused her State of the District address on the

multitude of positive academic, athletic and technological accomplishments happening within the walls of Copiague. “I stood up on opening day and said that my philosophy, and everyone’s philosophy here, is ‘if it’s good for kids, it’s good,’” she said. “We are very proud that we are focused and moving in that direction.”

Dr. Bannon also discussed the District’s financial future, as well as the need for an increase in state funding in order to maintain its current educational programs. “What we need is an increase in state aid, which can be accomplished by unfreezing the Foundation Aid formula,” she said.

The summit also featured

student musical performances, spotlights on elementary, middle and high school clubs, and the introduction of the Class of 2016’s top 10 students. To conclude the program, attendees participated in a school community input activity to elicit feedback on ways the District can best promote its programs to the community.

In addition to Assemblywoman Jean-Pierre and Sen. Venditto, legislators in attendance included Town of Babylon Supervisor Richard Schaffer, Deputy Supervisor Antonio A. Martinez, Councilman Thomas Donnelly and Presiding Officer of the Suffolk County Legislature DuWayne Gregory.



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