

# Flora Bridge Schools Recruitment and Retention Timeline and Strategies

By Claire Eickhoff

- *Description of the school system including, but not limited to: number of schools, student enrollment in each school, number of music teachers, music classes offered*
  - Flora Bridge has three (3) elementary schools, one (1) middle school, and one (1) high school. There are four band directors and two directing assistants, two directors and one assistant director for the middle school and the high school. We have approximately 650 students regularly enrolled at the high school and 615 in our middle school.
  - We offer after-school tutoring on music theory for our 7th and 8th graders and the highschool has a music club that is mentored by the assistant director and covers theory, composition, and improvisation.
  - The middle school has three ensembles; a beginning orchestra that includes all grades (6th-8th), a 6th grade band, and a 7th-8th grade band. The highschool offers 4 ensembles; a concert orchestra (offered to all students), a symphony orchestra (offered to auditioning students), a concert band (offered to all students), and a Symphony band (offered to auditioning students).
  - For choir groups we have a choir class for each grade in middle school and two (2) choirs in high school; a concert choir and an audition choir called the *Virtuosos*. The orchestra directors of the middle and high school also direct the choirs.
- *Recruiting Sales Plan (including dates for every event/step)*
  - In the fall of the 5th grade year, we will offer pamphlets and links to resources, including the recruitment video. The videos will be filmed during the summer marching band camp, organized by band leadership (drum majors/section leaders) and the band faculty. We will gather quotes from PTO members and school board members to put on the back of the pamphlets and at the end of the video.
  - 5th grade students will also get to hear from band students at fall homecoming pep-rallies. The three drum majors will lead three separate groups to go to the

elementary schools where there will be a musical demonstration of the fight song and national anthem (as well as a few other fun tunes). Before departing, the groups will lead a short Q&A session with the students in order to get them more involved.

- *Instrument Testing Plan (what time of school and why?)*

- On the last Tuesday in March, each 5th grade class will have a director/assistant director visit their class and demonstrate their main instrument. Offering one or two 5th grade students to be able to hold and play the instrument in front of the class.
- A week after the visit, there will be instrument testing sessions for **ALL** 5th graders. Each student will get to try one string instrument, a brass instrument, and a woodwind instrument. Their name will get written down and an evaluation of how they respond to the instrument will get sent to their homeroom teacher and their parents/guardians. The parents/guardians will also receive information about the two-day "District Youth and Adolescent Music Introduction Clinic (DYNAMIC)" that will take place over spring break.

- *Follow Up Recruiting (when does this happen?)*

- DYNAMIC will take place inside the middle school to get students introduced to the campus. Student leadership will be at the host booth to provide information on the different areas of activities. We will ask for a representative of the company that helps provide rented instruments to also hold a booth at the event. Students will get a booklet when they arrive that will have all the instruments listed with an option to be given a "stamp." When students meet a mentor or member of student staff at a booth and hear about an instrument, they will get a stamp in their booklet that covers that specific instrument. When the student receives five (5) or more stamps they will proceed to the "prize booth" where they will get a t-shirt that represents the band and will be asked their top 2 instruments that they are interested in.
- On the second day of the event they will go to two different sessions, the first being a staff and parent/guardian meeting with the local instrument provider in order to work out instrument renting/buying. If a family is undecided we can make accommodations for the day so their student can still participate in the second session. The second session will be a split group clinic in different classrooms around the school. Each student will be guided to their rooms where they will be given a sectional that covers the basics of their new instrument (briefly)
  - How to put the instrument together
  - Small instrument
  - First three notes

- Putting away the instrument/instrument maintenance
- For students interested in choir, there will only be one day but it will be filled with just as much fun and learning. The students will be able to meet the staff and get an intro to singing with popular music. They will also be able to see the high-school groups perform and have a buddy system walk-through of the school with one of the high-school students. These sessions will mostly be for bonding experiences and stepping out of their comfort zones.
- *Class Groupings*
  - We will be very helpful in the scheduling process for our advisors. During our clinics and meetings we will make it very clear what options might be available for our students. Because of our after-school lessons that we offer to students interested but have to start late (after 6th grade), we will be able to help anyone who wants to be in the bands. These lessons will be free for those who have scheduling circumstances that do not allow them to be introduced properly to the program. These free lessons can also be taken if students need to transfer out for a semester due to a credit requirement or an unfortunate situation that has caused them to retake classes. Appeals can be made through the main office or the head band/orchestra director of the high-school.
  - The directors of each group will be available to help support advisors during the scheduling process, willing to help with the paperwork or organizational support throughout the harrowing period.
- *Invitation To Join*
  - 1. We will be giving t-shirts/stickers/pins/posters to students that help or attend any of our music events and hosting spirit days where students can gain recognition for supporting these groups and their apparel
  - 2. We will be extremely active on social media in order to connect with students who might be homeschooled and want to transition to public schools or out of state transfers who are looking for a school to come to.
  - 3. We will have pep rallies and groups who visit the schools every year so from their first year of elementary school they can feel encouraged to explore the musical side of school. We also support our elementary music teachers as often as possible by offering them instruments and tools to use in their lessons.
- *Getting the Right Quality Equipment*
  - On our website/pamphlets/meeting agendas we will **ALWAYS** have information about where they can rent instruments or get their instruments repaired. We will discuss this in our DYNAMIC events and make sure the parents are aware of the difference in quality that an instrument can have. At booths will be able to provide

a list of options that will be suitable for a beginner and also instruments or websites to avoid when looking for an instrument.

- Our local instrument provider will be on sight for our entire clinic event and the parent/guardian meeting will go over things to look for and what to avoid
- Our renting options will be controlled by our local instrument provider so when asked we will provide their information so that we don't make any false promises

- *Start-up Clinic Information*

- Though we have a large event (DYNAMIC) earlier in the year we will also provide a second clinic near the beginning of their 6th grade year. This will be held on a smaller scale but students will again be given sectionals to review the basics of the instrument and corrections of any improper habits that might have been made over the summer. Choir students will get their beginning repertoire to have before the start of the school year, students who go to this clinic will have a good chance of solo opportunities later in the year so it is advertised that way and highly recommended.
- During this second event, there will be another parent/guardian meeting that will explain all the events that will happen throughout their first year as well as proper practice habits and time management