

# HMSO

## HAMMARSKJOLD MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Dr. Anna M. Braun & Ms. Mary Crum *HMSO Directors*

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September 21, 2009

We are so glad your child will be participating in the Hammarskjold Middle School Orchestra (HMSO) this year! We know you will be incredibly proud of your child when you see and hear the progress they will make this year.

For information about the HMSO, announcements, the calendar of events, notices, and the after-school rehearsal schedule, visit Dr. Braun's "TeacherWeb" site. You can reach the site via a link on the Hammarskjold website. Go to the STAFF page and click on Dr. Braun's name. You can also reach the site at this address:

<http://TeacherWeb.com/NJ/HammarskjoldMiddleSchool/DrBraun>

Below is a sampling of what is on the HMSO website.

- Notices: Includes documents such as *Music Instrument Dealers & Repair Shops*, *Guide to Purchasing a Stringed Instrument*, and *Practical Practice Pointers*. Any notices given to students are also posted here.
- Gotta have it! Music: A classical music listening guide.
- Explore Music: Links to music theory, notation, composition, and music history sites.
- Listening: MP3 files of our concert music students can download and practice with. We can burn a CD if you have difficulty download the MP3 files-just ask us!
- Tuning Notes: MP3 files of tuning notes for every string.
- Audition Links: Links to honors orchestra audition information for advanced students.
- Concerts: Details about our concerts, including reporting times and concert dress can be found on this page. Our concerts for 2009-2010 are: HMSO Winter Concert—Tuesday, December 15, 2009 (snow date: Thursday, December 17, 2009) and HMSO Spring Concert—Tuesday, June 1, 2010. Both concerts start at 7:00pm and are free.
- Rehearsals: Several after-school rehearsals are scheduled before each of our concerts. Students receive extra credit for attending after-school rehearsals. Students are given passes to take the late bus. There is no charge (pay to participate fee) for these rehearsals, as they are an extension of the curriculum.

As part of the course requirement, students will have rotating small-group lessons approximately twice a month with either Ms. Crum or Dr. Braun. Students will receive a packet of lesson music (including scales, etudes, and solos) to work on in addition to the music they are preparing for concerts. Each student will receive a copy of their rotating lesson schedule to keep in their agenda. Schedules will also be posted in room 1200F. If students are unable to attend a lesson due to a trip, test, or a quiz, we will make every effort to reschedule the lesson. Advanced students who study privately will be working on chamber music and developing sightreading skills. Very advanced students auditioning for the Region or All-State orchestras will receive audition preparation instruction. All students will be taught how to tune their instruments during lessons, as well as receive individualized instruction in performance technique.

Please encourage your child to practice! Students should be practicing a minimum of two hours per week in order to have a successful orchestra experience. Violin and viola students have been assigned closet space in the instrument storage room where they can keep their instruments during the day. Cellists do not need to bring their instruments to school, but must still have an instrument at home with which to practice. Not surprisingly, research indicates that students who have the most teacher-contact time and spend the most time in home practice achieve the highest performance levels. With this in mind, it is vital to your child's success that they are reminded to attend small group lessons and to spend time practicing at home. In order to help students to practice more effectively, MP3 files of the concert music are available on the HMSO website for students to listen to and practice with. Students have received home copies of the concert music. If your child needs an extra copy of the music, they can help themselves to the music located in the file sorter in the back of Room 200F or download a PDF file of Dr. Braun's arrangements from the HMSO website.

The best way to reach us is via email. Dr. Braun's email address is [abraun@ebnet.org](mailto:abraun@ebnet.org). Ms. Crum's email address is [mcrum@ebnet.org](mailto:mcrum@ebnet.org). We want to see your child reach their fullest potential, so please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for the privilege of working with your child!

Regards,

Dr. Braun & Ms. Crum