
What Our RCSD Alumnae Say About the Instrumental Music Program

Brandi – Freshman, Flute

I am a huge band geek and I hope I'll be staying in a music program for the rest of my life. I started laying flute in fifth grade at **Roosevelt Elementary**. It took me three days to get any sound out of my flute, but I worked very hard to play Mary Had A Little Lamb. **Kennedy Middle School** really helped strengthen my education in music since I had band every other day. This was a dream come true for me. I wasn't the best player, but practiced a lot at home to get better.

There are many other kids who love music just as much as I do. Music helps people with many different aspects and it would be a shame if younger kids could not have the chance to experience what I have. Sequoia High School's band will be in trouble if the K-8 music programs were gone because no newcomers would have any or enough band experience to play the beautiful music we play now. Music is also very important at our high school and we've worked hard to get where we are now. Please help save the music.

Nina – Alto Saxophone, Junior

I decided to start playing the saxophone after a woman named Carol McNamara came to my fifth grade class to talk about the band at our school and the different instruments we could choose from. After that year, I went to **Kennedy Middle School** where I played in the band for all three years. Some people, mainly my parents, wondered if I should be focusing on the piano instead of saxophone, because that's what I was really good at. But from my first year playing in a band, with two trumpets, a flute and one other saxophone at **Orion** (my elementary school), I was hooked. Band gave me something more than just the ability to play another instrument. It became a second home for me.

Jimmy – Senior, Percussion

I have been involved in the Redwood City music program for the last eight years. It has literally changed my life. The music program has always been something special, different from the hours spent with calculators and textbooks. Carrying your instrument to school was like carrying a badge; and once you entered the band room, whether you were aware of it or not, you were partaking of something unique. Because that is what music is, and what it means to students: uniqueness. Individuality. The universal language. Young people and young students can find themselves at the most important point in their lives as far as finding one's identity. Take that away and you take away a staple of education.

Stephanie – Freshman, Tuba

From kindergarten to fifth grade I went to **Orion Elementary School** and from 6th to 8th grade I went to **Kennedy Middle School**. At both schools I had the time of my life! One of the reasons I did was because of music. In 4th grade we were taught to play the recorder. That's when I realized I loved music. In 5th grade we had the option of playing any instrument. I picked the violin. My friends and I had so much fun every other day going to music and learning new stuff.

When 6th grade came around my new teacher was Ms. Vivian. I was put in band class not orchestra because of my schedule. Ms. Vivian gave everyone a chance to play and try every single instrument so we could figure out which one we liked best. I tried all of the instruments and decided I liked the tuba the best. Each year I learned more and more. Being the only tuba was really cool. I also got a lot of "Wow! You play the tuba?!" being a really, really small girl, but I loved it and Ms. Vivian made the music so fun. I remember when I got the low B flat at the beginning of 7th graded. Everyone was really happy and I got Student of the Month for trying so hard.

In 8th grade I looked forward to 7th period everyday because that's when I had music. We all had so much fun learning and advancing together. At the end of 8th grade all the 8th graders got to go to Disneyland. Being with my friends and music was so fun – that was one of the best trips of my life. Also in CMEA we won a superior rating. The first one Ms. Vivian had gotten, so we were excited!! When I graduate and decided I wanted to go to **Sequoia High School** I also knew that no matter what I would continue music for my four years in high school and on with it in college. The Redwood City School District introduced me to playing music. It gave me the greatest experiences of my life.

Julia -- Oboe

Can you imagine a world without music? Can you imagine a country without music? Can you imagine a state without music? The answer for me at least is NO. Then how can people be imagining a city without music? That will be the repercussion if the Redwood City elementary school music program is cut. At least half the kids in the band at my high school went through the Redwood City schools. If they weren't here there wouldn't be enough students to even have a band class. This would also affect the Woodside and Carlmont high schools which have really strong music programs. People who have music also tend to do better in school. I am a straight A student and if there wasn't a band at my high school, then I wouldn't be where I am now.

Keith -- Saxophone

I was a part of the Redwood City elementary school music program when I was in middle school. The program made me learn how to experience music in different ways, like going out and listening to music I would never have listened to. It also made me want to look into a career in music. Keith,

Jared – Bass, Drums

I have been playing guitar for seven years and I am very advanced for anyone of my age of 14. I also play bass and drums and I am in two rock bands outside of school. The only thing I am good at is music. If I didn't get a music degree in college I would be a hobo on the street. And no one likes a hobo. Otherwise, I could be playing at a benefit concert helping people with AIDS or cancer or something. Music is all I have to live for.

Morgan – Flute, Freshman

I didn't come from the Redwood City School District, but I have many friends in band that did. Without the people that come from Redwood City our band would be much smaller and we may not have enough students to have a band at our high school. Band connects people. It is a class that allows us to really work together as a team. Without my music education I wouldn't have the same values as I do now. Music is my passion and it is so important for students to have something that they love to do. From a student that is influenced by many former Redwood City Elementary School band students – please save the music!

Nolan – Senior

I have never been through the music programs in Redwood City Elementary Schools, but it is obvious to me who has and how much it has helped more than half of our players in the Advanced Band class alone. Their experience which they obtained prior to coming up to the high school level helps us sound good and it gives them the confidence to want to play in high school.

Laura – Tenor Saxophone, Sophomore

I grew up through the San Carlos music program, but the Redwood City elementary school music program is very important to me. As a freshman last year, we had a band of 24 kids. Now, just in one year, we have almost doubled to 45 kids. This is because about ¾ of the kids coming into the band went through the Redwood City elementary school music program.

Frances, French Horn

In fourth grade I heard about the music program and decided to “just try” playing French horn. I’m now in the Peninsula Youth Orchestra, a woodwind quartet, take French horn and harp lessons, and am considering being a music major in college. This wouldn’t have happened if I hadn’t gotten involved with music in middle school.

Andres – Percussion, Senior

Without music programs at my elementary school, I would have never gotten interested in percussion. Music now is a major part of my life as I play percussion in band, play snare in the newly-formed drum line, take bass lessons, and play bass in a band with three of my friends. It is important to introduce music to kids early as it can change their lives drastically.

Marley – Percussion

To me playing an instrument puts a meaning to my life. I know that I can make it somewhere with my music; I can be somebody. Music gives you something to do, people to connect with, and possibly a job if you work hard.

Bulen – Flute, Sophomore

If I hadn’t been able to play music in middle school, I wouldn’t have played music in high school. The middle school music program at **Roy Cloud** gave me the opportunity to learn and to continue playing music throughout high school. Our high school band supports many other school programs because we play at football and basketball games. I have had nothing but positive experiences while playing music from fifth through tenth grades.

Helen – Saxophone, Freshman

I was very fortunate to be taught by Ms. Vivian the hard-working, passionate band teacher at **Kennedy**. Though had, I made many new friends and was exposed to many different types of music. I loved being able to participate in a group where everyone was working together to accomplish a certain goal. Without my middle school music education I would not be playing the saxophone in high school.

Zeke – Saxophone, Senior

I have been playing in the high school band and jazz band for four years and the only way this was possible was because of the Redwood City public school music program. I went to **Clifford Elementary School** and this is where I learned to read music, play scales and keep basic time counts. Without this knowledge I would have never been able to keep up with high school band. The elementary school music program is important because it gets students ready for more advanced music.

Danielle – Trumpet

In order for our high school music programs to succeed, we need strong feeder programs. Besides the benefits to the high school music program, K-8 music helps kids everywhere. It gives us a positive outlet and a chance to make new friends. It also teaches us discipline and perseverance and gives us the amazing experience of performing. But the most important thing about music is that it’s fun!

Christopher – Clarinet, Sophomore

I came up through the Redwood City elementary school music program and that changed my life. Without the music program I would have a different high school experience and most of my friends would be gone. Music to me is like a sport that is just as good as football, basketball, baseball, etc. When you play a sport, it is a commitment and not only that you play to have fun. Kids need to be given the chance to have the best musical experience possible the same way I did.

Abhineet – Clarinet, Sophomore

Music is a big part of my life. When I would step into the music room at **Kennedy Middle School** and set up my instrument it was like all the problems I was going through that day disappeared when I started playing; the problems were gone and my mind relaxed. My band teacher, Ms. Vivian, helped me a lot though my music career in middle school. She was the reason I was selected to participate in the CMEA Peninsula Conference in 8th grade and she is one of the reasons why I am now first chair clarinet as a 10th grader. Going home and practicing my instrument helped me stay out of trouble and keeps other kids out of trouble too.

Christian

At my home I sometimes have hard times. Playing my instrument is a way that helps me escape all the issues because when I play I feel like I'm giving out positive energy.

Nicole – Flute, Sophomore

Music has changed me to become a smarter, responsible person. Music helps soothe me and it helps me to become more aware of things. I have always loved having music in my life and being able to that I am musically gifted.

Kim – Flute

The world would be a less colorful and creative place if it wasn't for the K-8 elementary school music program. They expose kids to great music and stimulate their creative minds. Every great musician needs to start off somewhere, but if the bridge linking them to music was broken at an early age their future wouldn't be as great.