

# **Music in Castro Valley Elementary Schools K-8, 1948-1970**

## **A Personal perspective**

**By**  
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**May 2010**

The writer of this paper is a “collector”: programs, tools, pens, contracts, write-ups--- anything that is personal. During a lifetime of service and wearing many different hats as listed below, collection items became extensive.

College Music Teacher	Elementary Music Teacher	School Principal
CMEA officer	CMEA adjudicator	CVTA President
High School Math Teacher	Musician Union member	Computer buff
Industry analyst	Symphony Orchestra member	Private violin teacher
String Quartet member	Jr. Hi French & German teacher	Music Coordinator

Sorting out just the CV School music items from the larger collection became the first item of business.

This project began by wondering how many Superior ratings and Command Performances the Honor Orchestra had been awarded over the years. Research provided not only that information but much more. So it was decided to let actual records tell the music story. Old programs, awards, letters, news clips, and pictures were assembled. They were then dated, digitized, arranged in searchable order and finally attached to this written commentary. These are the records that really tell the story of Music in the Castro Valley Elementary Schools.

The Honor Orchestra is highlighted in for 3 reasons: (1) it was the initial thrust of this whole project, (2) Personal association, and (3) There were more records available about this group than other worthy groups.

### **Prelude**

During World War II (1941-1945), Castro Valley was a small town with one school: Castro Valley Elementary School located on Castro Valley Boulevard adjacent to the Adobe Art Center. The teachers were all women (two exceptions: Don McCullough and Roy Johnson) because men were off fighting the war. Wives and children of some servicemen stationed at Camp Parks or Shumaker Naval Base (both located in the Dublin area) lived in available housing in Castro Valley. After the war some of these families elected to remain in Castro Valley so the housing boom started. Castro Valley was a good place to live.

New schools were added as the population grew. The first school added was Redwood Primary in 1947. Then came Chabot and Marshall elementary schools, followed by A.B. Morris Jr. Hi in 1951. Stanton and Clifton elementary schools were next. The old

Elementary school was demolished and a replacement was built in 1953 on an adjacent property—the site of the current school. Parsons school followed along with Redwood Intermediate in 1953.

### Castro Valley schools

CV Elem.	1919-1953	Palomares	1954
Redwood Prim	1947- ?	Proctor	1955
Chabot	1949	Sydney	? - ?
Marshall	1949	Norbridge	? - ?
Stanton	1950	A.B. Morris Jr. Hi	1951
Clifton	1951- ?	Earl Warren Jr. Hi	1958 - 2007
Independent	1951	CV High	1956
Parsons	1953- ?	Canyon High	1964-2007
CV Elem (New)	1953	Jensen Ranch	? - ?
Redwood Int.	1953-?	Creekside Middle	2007
Vannoy	1954	Canyon Middle	2007

### Instrumental Music---The Beginning

The first instrumental music teacher hired for the Castro Valley schools was George Degregori, a returned war veteran and recent graduate of San Jose State College, in 1948. He worked out of the old elementary school. He had an office on the stage and taught music lessons on the stage until A.B. Morris Jr. Hi was built and he relocated. He was also the organizer and director of the first community band in Castro Valley. The Community Band was later taken over by Tony Morelli after George Degregori moved to Arizona in 1960.

Screening potential instrumental music students during those first years involved a “music” test. Students scoring high on the hearing part of the test were directed toward string instruments. Counseling was also provided for students having physical limitations.

New and more teachers required more specialized coordination. Mr. DeGregori was appointed Supervisor of Music. Although a full-time teacher himself he was given one day each week for administrative and coordinating activities. The district really got a bargain with that arrangement. Administering a growing music program while teaching involved a great deal of planning and coordination. The few extra dollars which the district paid for this necessary music function was well worth the return. When Mr. DeGregori left the district in 1960 because of the health of his son, the district sadly lost the first titan of the music world in Castro Valley. His administrative duties were passed on to Mr. Orgill.

A second instrumental teacher, Denise Elder, a string specialist, was hired in 1952 to assist as the instrumental music program grew. In 1954 Miss Elder resigned and Melvin Orgill, a string specialist, was hired to replace her. At that time the Castro Valley Elementary School District consisted of six elementary schools and one Jr. Hi

Instrumental music instruction began in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and continued instruction was provided for the advanced students in grades 5-8. As the enrollment increased, small school ensembles were created ---loosely called bands or orchestras. There were strange combinations of instruments in each elementary school depending on the choice of instruments made by students at that school. One might find a school “band” consisting of 6 trumpets, 3 clarinets, 1 saxophone, 7 drummers, 5 flutes, 1 trombone, and 1 violin. Such a grotesque performing ensemble had no verifiable identification except “the school band”, but that was at least a start.

In defense of the above mentioned grouping of students, this system after World War II, was in wide use throughout the East Bay. Virtually all surrounding school districts employed the same system. No recognizable legitimate music ensemble appeared until the Jr. Hi level.

After one year on the job, Melvin Orgill strongly suggested to Supervisor George DeGregori that a better way of grouping students into performing groups should be explored. Both teachers agreed. They pooled their ideas and came up with a district plan which, in turn, was presented to the superintendent for approval.

### **The Plan---Phase one**

The first phase of the plan involved having a district orchestra and a district band---students coming from all schools to a central location. The plan stressed the need for orchestras to look and sound like orchestras and bands to look and sound like bands. Under this plan the groups could be populated according to traditionally recognized formulas. Hence, the orchestras were built around strings with wind and percussion as color instruments as in major symphony orchestras. Bands were populated in a similar fashion.

The groups were to meet twice a week (7:45-8:45 am) at A.B. Morris School. Band met on Mondays and Wednesdays while the Orchestra rehearsed on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Parents provided transportation to the rehearsals and school buses returned the students to their respective schools in time for regular classes beginning at 9:00 am.

### **The Plan---Phase two**

The second phase of the plan was really quite innovative. It focused on beginning instrumental instruction. Recognizing that young players, 4<sup>th</sup> graders, were eager but raw beginners, the plan took into account the need for more instructional time with these younger students. Therefore beginning students met with a teacher every school day (at a different time so they didn't miss the same class every day) for ½ hour for the first five weeks. Classes were organized by instrument groups: strings, woodwinds, brass & percussion. It takes almost a week to teach students, in a large class setting, how to care for the instrument and hold it properly. Then comes the job of producing a sound. There are so many things for the student to think about. With daily contact, they don't have

time to forget and proper patterns are reinforced each day. At the end of 5 weeks, the student is finally able to work on his own under the weekly lesson plan.

Following this initial introduction program, students would meet with the music teacher once a week, like their older and more advanced counterparts. This program produced outstanding results and attrition was greatly reduced.

Recruiting beginners began with a well-publicized parent meeting held during the second week of each school year. Here, the instruments were displayed and demonstrated. Then school instruments were assigned to students on a first-come-first-served basis.

Counseling was also provided for undecided students as well as for students with physical limitations. Assigned school instruments were later given to the students at the first class lesson. The school district could not possibly provide instruments to all who wanted to play so many affordable instrument rental possibilities were made available by local merchants. Acquiring an instrument was not a real problem.

Underlying the music plan was the recognition that without a good feeder program, good performing groups never happen. Starting new beginners each year was absolutely vital to the instrumental music program. And, of course, the high schools became the ultimate beneficiaries.

### **The Plan---Phase Three**

A third phase of the program involved special consideration for the string program. Beginning string players were to be recruited at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level based on reading scores. Those who were good readers, as recommended by classroom teachers, were eligible to enter the instrumental music program. The decision to start string players early took into account that strings are harder to learn and therefore need more time at the beginning. An interesting observation: Almost all string players were honor students in their schools.

The wind and percussion players in the orchestras were selected from the best players in the respective bands, trained by the brass and woodwind teachers. These band teachers were most cooperative and helpful in providing the orchestras with the best players available.

Over time, orchestras and bands were featured on separate programs.

### **Music Handbook**

A detailed description of the K-8 instrumental music program can be viewed by consulting "Programs" (a companion file with this history) under the file name "1961 Music Handbook .".

### **Graduated levels of performance**

With great success and community support, the program outlined above, expanded and developed into three levels of performing groups for orchestras. Enrollments for 1961-62: Illustrate, in general, the number of students in the program.

Beginning Orchestra (64)

Advanced (intermediate) Orchestra (74)

Honor Orchestra (62).

The Band program developed into four levels of performance:

Beginning Band (130)

Intermediate (Cadet) Band (60)

Advanced Band (89)

Honor Band (83).

### **Other motivating considerations**

Students were encouraged to take private lessons as much as possible. This was a way of producing greater instrument proficiency and better sounding orchestras and bands. Also, students were encouraged to participate in the annual CMEA (California Music Educators' Association) solo festival. Playing a solo in front of an audience, especially a judge did wonders for motivating students to develop technical musical skills. Results from CMEA Solo Festival, held at Cal State College Hayward in March 1966, show that 65 Castro Valley instrumentalists participated. Of the 65 ratings, 18 were Superior (I), 35 Excellent (II), 12 were Good (III). Three students merited Command Performances.

### **CMEA Festivals**

CMEA (California Music Educators' Association) sponsored annual competitive music festivals designed to improve all school programs and to show-case, through competition, the good work done in the most successful school districts. There were different and separate festivals for Orchestras and Bands; Choral groups; and finally soloists--- mentioned above. School groups performed before a panel of 3 judges who, in turn, rated the performance--- I (Superior), II (Excellent), III (Good), and IV (Fair). The published ratings were meant to instill a competitive spirit and also to improve programs in all school districts. About 1961, a new category was instituted: **Command Performance**. Certain groups which had received I (Superior) ratings were further selected for a special Command Performance before all festival participants---the best of the festival. To be chosen to be in this elite group was indeed an honor. The Castro Valley Honor Orchestra was the only elementary group to consistently achieve this distinction year after year.

### **Summer Music Program**

A recent math study has shown that over the summer, students forget about 9% of what was recently learned. This was a similar observation made by CV music teachers, After a two-three month summer vacation, teachers met their returning students and wondered if they were starting over again. So much had been forgotten. Thus a summer music program was instituted in order to salvage some of the progress made the previous year.

## **The “challenge” system**

Within each orchestra or band there are sections such as 1<sup>st</sup> Violins, trumpets, clarinets, cellos etc. Within each section there is a section leader---usually the best player in the section. Following the section leader, in order of technical proficiency, other members of the section are seated. Among music students practicing to improve their proficiency, there is considerable change and progress being made---some faster, others slower. Therefore the more aggressive students aspire to be seated higher in their orchestra or band sections, thus providing for personal recognition and achievement.

In order to achieve this transfer of seating position, a system of challenges was used. Students were allowed to challenge ahead one stand in their current section---there being two students per stand. A particular orchestral/band piece would be selected as the challenge piece and the date for challenges would be announced. Intentions to challenge were never announced until the time of the challenge. The element of surprise seemed important and encouraged everyone to practice. At the prescribed time, the challenger would name the person to be challenged, this being a surprise to the person being challenged. The teacher selected the measures to be played. The challenger played first followed by the person being challenged. All of this was done in front of the rest of the orchestra or band. The winner was announced immediately by the teacher and any change of seating was done at that time.

For a teacher preparing for a concert, this system accomplished wonders in terms of getting students to play their parts with accuracy. It was also an incredible way to reward talented and hard-working students. There was considerable prestige among music students according to where they sat in their orchestra/band section.

## **Weekly lessons at the local schools**

Except for the daily 5-week beginning instruction, all instrumental students, except those taking private lessons, were scheduled for a weekly lesson with a district music teacher. Being enrolled in a school program meant that each student would necessarily receive a letter grade each term for progress made in mastering an instrument. Lessons were scheduled by groups of similar ability and like instrument. The teacher specializing in strings obviously taught string students. Woodwind and brass specialists taught students of their specialty. Twenty minutes were allowed for group lessons and 10 minutes for individual lessons. The focus of the lessons was technique rather than playing familiar tunes. At the end of each lesson, each student was given a practice sheet to be filled and signed by a parent verifying the amount of practice done. The requirement was 30 minutes a day for six days of the week---a total of 180 minutes a week. Requiring the parent’s signature was a way of keeping the records accurate and honest. This was a great tool and parental support was great. When the student returned for a lesson the next week, the old practice slip was turned over to the teacher for record keeping and a new sheet was handed out.

The object of these kinds of lessons was to individualize instruction. The student was able to progress at his own speed and ability level.

Much credit and appreciation must be given for the efforts given by all of the music teachers listed below. Each made a contribution which helped build and advance the elementary school instrumental music program. Some taught only one year. Some taught longer but appreciation is extended to all.

### **Instrumental music teachers**

George DeGregori	1948	1960	Band
Denise Elder	1952	1954	Orchestra
Melvin W. Orgill	1954	1970	Orchestra
Anthony Morelli	1957	1967	Band
Frances Jackson	1960	1961	Orchestra
Brent Heisinger	1960	1962	Band
Joyce Thompson	1961	1966	Orchestra
Jad Mintun	1962	1967	Band
Jerry Turney	1963	1965	Band
Richard Martin	1965	1966	Band
Janice Gaynor	1966	1967	Band
Jeanne K. Itoda	1966	1967	Orchestra
Nancy Julian	1967	1968	Orchestra
Don Neddeau	1967	1968	Band
Tom Baker	1967	1969	Band
Robert Thurgood	1968	1969	Orchestra
Jack Leudders	1968		Band
Richard Adams	1969	1970	Band

### **The Titans of Instrumental Music**

The titans of the Castro Valley Elementary instrumental music program were four: George Degregori (Band), Melvin Orgill (Orchestra), Tony Morelli (Band), and Joyce Thompson-Baker (Orchestra).

Without taking space to enumerate individual differences and qualities, this can be said of all four: They were teachers who significantly raised the bar of instrumental music education at the elementary (K-8) level. They were passionate about their work. They were dedicated to the program. They believed in the potential of each individual student and thus were effective teachers. They were capable musicians. They were never satisfied with the *status quo*. There was always room for improvement. They constantly strived to raise the bar to the next level. They devoted hours of personal time to furthering the program: before school, after school, week-ends, and evenings---without extra pay.

Over the course of several years, music educators from different parts of the state came to Castro Valley to see and learn for themselves the magic of success. Some districts tried

to copy the program but without success. Without dedicated and passionate teachers, programs will never achieve a maximum potential.

**Formula for success**

There are three elements needed for the success of any music program:

1. Teachers who are dedicated and passionate about their discipline. This is the most difficult of the elements to recognize and assess at recruiting time. The old adage says: “It takes one to know one.”
2. A program which enables a successful outcome.
3. An administration which supports such a program.

There remains no substitute for the time, effort and practice required to produce a qualified instrumentalist.

**Enrollment figures for performing Bands and Orchestras**

(HO=Honor Orch IO=Intermediate Orch BO=Beginning Orch)  
 (HB=Honor Band IB=Intermediate Band CB=Cadet Band BB=Beginning Band)

Date	HO	IO	BO	HB	IB	CB	BB
54-55							
55-56							
56-57	60						
57-58	61		22	64			
58-59	63	43	63				
59-60	69	34	60	103			
60-61	67	61	57	94		95	116
61-62	62	74	62	83	89	60	130
62-63	66	84	63	67	91	78	111
63-64	71	69	100	89	103	99	101
64-65	73	60	69	87	82	107	86
65-66	77	59	72	81	86	84	112
66-67	67	51	55	75	80	77	98
67-68	63	55	63	74	82	75	88
68-69	59	70	51	89	74	76	99
69-70	61	57		91	76		

**Recordings**

Century records recorded several of the orchestra/band concerts. This was a good idea but since the concerts were held in high school gymnasiums the results were not good. The acoustics in gymnasiums are notoriously bad and the reverberating sound, as it bounced off the walls several times, only exacerbated the intonation and precision problems associated with school groups.

## **Uniforms**

During the 1950's , high school bands were largely associated with marching bands--- uniforms, parades, football games, half-time shows. The emphasis was on glamour and show. Little has changed. However, uniforms were important and that trend trickled down to bands at the Jr. Hi and Elementary levels.

Uniforms (light blue jackets) were purchased for the Castro Valley A.B. Morris Band in about 1953-54—shown in pictures of that era. Information about the money needed to buy the instruments is not available.

Gray pants for boys and gray skirts for girls along with white socks, and yellow ties were provided by the individual student. Jackets were issued before concerts

Early pictures of orchestras at A.B. Morris show that this same ensemble was used for them also. When both groups performed at the same time, orchestra members wore the traditional white blouse or shirt with the gray skirts or pants.

Separate uniforms for the Honor Orchestra were purchased by the Parent Club in about 1958-59. The first picture showing the group wearing this uniform was in 1960.

The Honor orchestra uniform consisted of a red pull-over sweater with the initials CV logo emblazoned on the front. Students provided white shirts or blouses, red bow ties, gray pants or skirts and white socks.

Beginning and intermediate bands and orchestras wore the traditional dark pants or skirts with white shirts or blouses.

## **Vocal and Classroom Music**

Vocal and classroom music, (K-8), also came under the supervision of the Music Coordinator.

In the post-war days of education, music, along with reading, writing, and arithmetic, was one of the subjects taught in the K-6 classrooms. Teachers were recruited and assigned to schools according to the teacher's musical ability and/or needs of the school. The most musically capable teacher was assigned the job of training a school choir in addition to regular teaching responsibilities.

At the 7-8 level, trained music teachers were hired to teach classroom music and direct the school choir---a full-time job.

Phyllis Hubbard was the first vocal and classroom teacher specialist hired by Mr. Degregori in about 1950 followed by Kathleen Mote in 1955.

- Phyllis Hubbard (1950-1955)
- Kathleen Mote (1955-57)
- Wilbur Martin (1957-1961)
- Milada Dolezal (1959 EW)
- Vahan Toolajian (1959-1960 ABM)

Over the years, K-6 classroom teachers became less inclined to teach music in the classroom therefore specialists were hired to go from school to school and teach music in each of the classrooms. Two talented and effective teachers, Ruby Ann Pappas (hired about 1963) and Betty Livesay (hired in about 1964) provided a valuable classroom service. They made a significant impact on classroom music. Unfortunately, budget cuts forced their retirement in about 1968.

### **Choir Festivals**

Detailed records documenting this music education activity are not available. However records do show that the district choir festivals were first originated by Wilbur Martin. These choir festivals were held in one of the high school gymnasiums in the spring of the year. Select elementary choirs participated along with the two Jr. Hi choirs. Massed choir numbers were performed at the end of each festival with all participating students singing together. Having 600-700 students singing together was an impressive spectacle. After Wilbur Martin left in 1961, the Choir Festivals became the responsibility of the Coordinator of Music, through 1969.

Date	Festival Number	Number of Schools	Number of students
25 Mar 1958	1	4	272
23 Apr 1959	2	8	544
12 May 1960	3	9	612
23 May 1961	4	8	544
24 May 1962	5	9	539
2 May 1963	6	9	650
30 Apr 1964	7	8	628
8 Apr 1965	8	9	501
21 Apr 1966	9	8	559
20 Apr 1967	10	9	652
4 Apr 1968	11	8	547
17 Apr 1969	12	8	749

### **State Textbooks**

State music textbooks were provided each K-6 classroom teacher and were written to coincide with the social studies curriculum outlined for each grade level. For instance, at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, as students studied American History the songs in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade text included American music such as spirituals, regional music, western songs, gold rush song, mountain music, Steven Foster songs, sea chanteys etc. The textbook came with recordings as well as piano accompaniment. These grade-level song books were a great resource to the classroom teacher and especially helpful to those teachers lacking a musical background.

These music texts were adopted at the state level so the competition among publishers was fierce when the adoption process came around every 4 or 5 years. There was big money involved for the company winning the contract---books for every school district in the state.

### **The Castro Valley Honor Orchestra**

This special section of this history of CV instrumental music is devoted to the Castro Valley Honor Orchestra. This group is being singled out because of the unusual number of special recognitions given this group over the years outside the school district. A special note of gratitude goes to those wonderful teaching associates who helped train many of the musicians in the orchestra.

<b>Castro Valley Honor Orchestra</b>				
<b>Festival Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Command Performance</b>	<b>Other Special Recognition</b>
1957		I-Superior		
1958		I-Superior		
5/2/1959	San Mateo HS	I-Superior		
1960		I-Superior		
5/6/1961	San Francisco	I-Superior		
4/12/1962			Yes	KGO TV
4/20/1963	Foothill HS	I-Superior		
11/8/1963			.	CV Sch Brd
11/1963	Skyline Hi, Oakland		Yes	Clinic Demo.
3/24/1964	San Mateo		Yes	CMEA Demo.
5/1/1965	San Lorenzo	I-Superior	Yes	
5/8/1965	Stockton		Yes	Demo group
4/29/1967	Mission San Jose	I-Superior	Yes	
3/27/1968	San Jose St College		Yes	
5/6/1968	Chabot College	I-Superior	Yes	
4/19/1969	Tennyson HS	I-Superior	Yes	
5/10/1969	Oakland Tech HS	I-Superior	Yes	

## **School Board Minutes recognizing Honor Orchestra**

The following is an excerpt from minutes of the Castro Valley School Board Meeting, dated 8 November 1963.

**“Board members expressed gratification for the letter of commendation received from J. Fredrick Müller, Director of the Educational Division of Scherl and Roth, Incorporated, manufacturers of musical instruments, directed toward the performance of the string section of the Honor Orchestra during the recent Conference of the Bay Area Teachers of Music Education. The Board requested that a letter of congratulations be forwarded to Melvin Orgill, Supervisor of Music, and the students who participated in the demonstration clinic during the Conference, together with a copy of the letter received from Mr. Müller.**

**“The Castro Valley School District Elementary Orchestra was started in 1957 and has maintained a high level of musicianship through the years. Students from fifth through eighth grades are auditioned for this orchestra and are awarded membership on the basis of technical proficiency. During several years of competition in CMEA Bay Section Music Festivals, the orchestra has consistently merited “Superior” ratings.**

**“Last April this 71-piece orchestra appeared on the TV Special, “The Young Sound of Music” over KGO-Channel 7, the only elementary school district orchestra among a group of six high school ensembles. The TV show was rated highly in newspaper commentaries.**

**“In November, 1963, the string section of the orchestra, consisted of 46 members, served as a demonstration group in a clinic-type study, “Building the Elementary String Program”. This was conducted as part of the CMEA Bay Section Fall Conference in Oakland, with J. Frederick Müller, Educational Division of Scherl Roth, serving as clinician. Mr. Frederick Müller is a nationally recognized figure in the field of music education.**

**“In a special letter to the Castro Valley School District Board of Trustees, Mr. Müller stated that the Castro Valley group is one of the top five finest groups of elementary boys and girls that he has come to know in the entire United States.**

**“The Music Parents Council is the nucleus group in the Castro Valley community which has a long sponsored growth in music and support musical activities.**

**“Biographical Sketch:**

**“Melvin W. Orgill, Supervisor of Music in the Castro Valley School District, is admirably equipped to lead his students to the appreciation and performance of fine**

**music. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, took graduate work at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado; at Stanford University in Stanford, California State College at Hayward, San Francisco State College, all in California. He also spent 17 months studying at the Konservatorium in Zurich, Switzerland, and 27 months at the Conservatoire Nationale de Paris in France. He has been active in CMEA efforts to establish the position of State Supervisor of Music in California.”**

End of Board Minutes.

### **Special recognitions—Honor Orchestra**

1. April 1963 this 71-piece orchestra appeared on the TV Special, “The Young Sound of Music” over KGO-Channel 7, the only elementary school district orchestra among a group of six high school ensembles. The TV show was rated highly in newspaper commentaries
2. 1963 Demonstration group for CMEA at Skyline Hi
3. 1964, Demonstration group for CMEA at San Mateo
4. 1965 Demonstrtrion group for CMEA at Stockton
5. 20 May 1967, Orchestra played on Radio KKHI from 9-10 am.
- 6 May 1967 16 violinists stood and played in concert 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement of Telemann violin sonata in F-Major.

### **Parental support**

The popularity and success of the instrumental music program reached beyond the bounds of Castro Valley. Many parents admitted that one of the main reasons for moving to Castro Valley was because of the music program.

Parents were more than willing to help in any way to see that their children received the best music education available. Thus, a music parents group was formed--- IMPS (Instrumental Music Parents Society). These wonderful people helped in so many ways to further the program. One notable accomplishment was the purchase and fitting of uniforms for the Honor Orchestra (red sweaters). Another achievement was raising \$1200 to pay for the buses transporting students from Orchestra/band rehearsals back to their respective schools.

The leadership of the IMPS changed each year with the election of a new president and secretary.

### **The End of an era**

As a prelude to the final collapse of the k-8 instrumental program, the storm clouds of rumors began circulating about 1966-67 about possible cuts in the program. Music teachers became uneasy and uncertain of their jobs and began to look elsewhere. In 1966 Joyce Thompson-Baker left and in 1967 Tony Morelli left---two of the remaining three

titans of the music program. Their departure was a devastating blow to the instrumental music program.

At the beginning of the 1969-70 school year, an extraordinary and unexpected decision was made at the district level to turn over the administration of the instrumental music program to a non-musician district administrator. The idea was to save the money being paid to the Coordinator of Music for administrative duties performed.

Rumors had been floating around for some time that cuts were to be made across the board but to have this program singled out, and so unexpectedly, was indeed shocking. Nevertheless, the decision was made. The wrecking ball had dropped.

It was too late for anyone to find a new job so an uncomfortable year followed. The last of the Titans resigned in 1970.

At this point, this history of the music program abruptly ends. What followed is another story.

### **CVHS music**

It would have been nice to include historical information about music at Castro Valley High School and Canyon High School but only sketchy information was available thus not included. This history is therefore limited to the K-8 Elementary music program. However, proper acknowledgement must be made to Eugene Graves and Elliott Charnow, Instrumental and Phyllis Whayne, Vocal at CVHS for all of the fine work they contributed.

### **Different School Districts**

The schools in the Castro Valley Unified School District (2010) come from four different school districts:

Hayward High School District	Castro Valley Elementary School District
Independent School District	Palomares School District

### **Music in 2010**

As an addendum, Miss Heidi Dahms provided the following limited information as a brief description of the total music program in Castro Valley schools as of May 2010.

Sue Susoeff	1979-2010	Vocal, CVHS
Cynde Meyer	1988-2010	Band, CVHS, Canyon, + Elem Schools
Heidi Dahms	1997-2010	Orch, CVHS, Canyon, All Elem Schools
Janet Steidel	1988-2010	Vocal, Canyon, 5 Elem Schools
Carine Zamora	Part-time 70%)	Band, Creekside, 5 Elem Schools
Diana Ryan	Part-time 20%	Vocal, Creekside

The schools being serviced by these music teachers are:

CVHS	Creekside Middle	Canyon Middle
CV Elem	Stanton	Proctor
Chabot	Vannoy	Marshall
Independent	Palomares	Jensen Ranch

Instrumental music begins at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Carine Zarmora and Diana Ryan have been released because of budget cuts.

### **Disclaimer**

Writing a history depends on records. The use of **available** records and documents formed the basis for this historical effort. Information not available is obviously not included. People reading this document may remember other facts and figures not included here; unfortunately that information was not available at the time of this writing. Hopefully this short document will at least give a perspective into the outstanding music department developed in the Castro Valley Schools during the 50's and 60's. In addition, the effort, dedication and leadership provided by some incredible teachers is hereby acknowledged.

**The End**