

Informed Parent Consent Letter

Dear Parent,

In addition to being the orchestra teacher at Ellicott Mills Middle School, I am also a graduate student in Music Education at the University of Maryland. As part of my class, I am conducting a research study at Ellicott Mills Middle School. A research study is a way to find out information about teaching and learning. I am trying to find out which teaching methods help middle school students learn how to play in tune most effectively. All middle school orchestra students are being asked to participate. Participation in this research is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that is unclear before deciding if you want your child to participate in the study. Any questions you have should be either sent to Mr. Denne at bdenne@hcpss.org or addressed by phone at 410-313-2839.

The purpose of the research study is to examine the effects of different training techniques on the students' ability to play in tune. The study will last 3 weeks. Your child will be asked to take a short pretest that will involve the recording of their performance. This will take place during your child's sectional time. They will also be given a series of exercises to practice during their home practice time. The exercises involve the use of a reference pitch. In order to participate in the study, student must have a way of listening to the reference pitch through a set of headphones. Students can either use pitches from the tuning page on the music website (http://www.emmsmusic.com/tuning_page.html) or a compact disc can be produced for those families that request it. At the end of the three-week study, student will take a short posttest that will also occur during their sectional time. These tests will have no impact on your child's grade.

There are no risks associated with you child's participation in the study beyond those of everyday life. The practical benefits of the study are that the results will be of use to Mr. Denne in evaluating and planning for continued progress in your child's orchestra class.

If you decide to grant permission and later change your mind, or if your child does not wish to continue with the testing, you are free to withdraw your child from the study at any time with no consequences whatsoever. Your child will still participate in daily music activities but will not be included in tests related to the study.

If your child participates, his or her identity will be kept confidential. Each child will be identified only by case number for purposes of analysis. All data, including the audio samples, will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and will be retained in confidential form only for future use in educational seminars or conferences.

Contacts:

Researcher:

Ben Denne - bdenne@hcpss.org

University of Maryland Faculty Advisor:

Michael Hewitt - mphewitt@umd.edu

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this consent form and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. You agree to allow your child to participate in the study.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Print Child's Name

Date

Signature of Researcher - Ben Denne