

CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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NEWS RELEASE

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Talented Musicians throughout Clifton Public Schools

On January 4, 2020, three CHS Mustangs auditioned and were selected to perform with the 2020 North Jersey Region Band and the 2020 North Jersey Region Orchestra. According to Bryan Stepneski, CHS Band Director, "Sophomores, Andrew Sieradzki (tuba), and Lukas Kulesa (percussion) and junior, Angel Guanga (violin) auditioned against the most talented student musicians throughout North Jersey."

The students were honored to be selected. "This was a culmination of months of hard work," said Andrew Sieradzki, "and it feels amazing that I was selected."

"It's going to be a great experience," reflected Lukas Kulesa.

Andrew and Lukas now qualify to audition for the NJ All-State Band on Saturday, January 18.

"I was very happy that I actually made it. There were over 100 violinists auditioning. I was so happy that I kept hugging everyone," said Angel Guanga.

According to Natalie Babiak, CHS Orchestra Director, Angel began strings later than other students as he was a band student before taking up the violin. "Through hard work, dedication, and skill, Angel progressed," said Babiak of her student. "He's a very giving student, which is one of the reasons that he is the CHS Orchestra Concertmaster."

The band concert is on Sunday, January 26, 2020, and the orchestra concert is on Sunday, February 9, 2020.

Jason Leshowitz, Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts, noted that in addition to the Clifton High School students, "WWMS 8th graders Hafsa Balki (violin) and Zayda Murphy (double bass) successfully auditioned to participate in this year's NJSMA Jr Region 1 Orchestra. 8th grader Penny Austin (violin) was selected as the 7th violin alternate."

Woodrow Wilson Middle School Orchestra Director, Justin Louie, provided a fun fact. “Hafsa and Zayda are the only two students in the NJSMA Region 1 Jr Orchestra from Passaic County!”

Hafsa and Zayda are two of 90 students representing the top middle school orchestra players from North New Jersey. They will have the opportunity to audition for the All-State Intermediate Ensemble in April.

Congratulations to all of the students representing Clifton Public Schools!

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