



Department of the Arts
Friends Academy
270 Duck Pond Road
Locust Valley, NY 11560

January 19, 2010

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I want to thank you for all of your support of the music program. Our winter concerts went very well and the kids are playing and singing better than ever. We even suspect that a few more of them have started practicing at home and it is making a big difference! Thank you also for your warm welcome of our newest music teachers, Dustin Bartley and James Liverani. Our new Upper School Symphony has also been very successful. We are working on challenging repertoire and learning how to function like a professional ensemble. Our conservatory day on Wednesday continues to challenge the students and give them the individual attention they need to make the most progress and our choirs are hard at work preparing exciting new repertoire and building vocal technique. I thank you for your support as we work to grow and improve the music program here at Friends.

If your child is a serious vocal or instrumental student at any level, beginner to advanced, you might want to consider participation in one of the four upcoming festivals sponsored by the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA). The purpose of the Solo & Ensemble Festival is to allow the student to perform in front of a certified Music Teacher/Adjudicator at which time they receive an objective evaluation of their performance capabilities and skills. This evaluation not only reinforces the positive aspects of their performance, but also offers helpful suggestions for improvement and supports the instruction students receive in school and from private music lessons. The purpose of the festival is to reinforce Standards of Excellence and the importance of music education. NYSSMA sponsors annual Solo and Ensemble Festivals throughout New York state, and participation in one of these is a pre-requisite for selection in All County, All State and All Eastern Festivals. These are the upcoming festivals available to Friends Academy students. We will not be taking any of our ensemble groups to Festival this year, but we encourage students to register for the Solo Festival.

NYSSMA SOLO & NON ALL-STATE JAZZ	March 22 & 23, 2010	Friends Academy
ALL-STATE (Level 6 – 10th & 11th Grade)	April 23 & 24, 2010	Schreiber High School
ALL-STATE JAZZ (Level 6 – 10th & 11th Grade)	May 7 & 8, 2010	East Meadow High School
PIANO FESTIVAL	May 11-13, 2010	C.W. Post, LI University

If your child is in 3rd through 11th grade and takes private instrumental or vocal lessons or is a serious musician within the school's music program, then you should consider having them participate in the solo festival. (One sure clue that your child is a serious musician is if they practice regularly at home!) If you choose to have your child participate, then consult with your private or school music teacher regarding the appropriate choice of music. Middle and Upper school Voice and Piano students should communicate with Mrs. Regelman, Instrumentalists should speak to Mr. Romano, Mr. Liverani or Mr. Tennyson and all Lower School students should speak to Ms. Alt about their preparations for any of the Festivals. Although the school doesn't provide private coaching for NYSSMA, we are always happy to share our expertise and students are welcome to work on their materials at any of our open sessions. We encourage students to participate in the Solo Festival for multiple years. This can provide a wonderful opportunity to nurture a student's growth over a long period of time.

VOCAL or INSTRUMENTAL registration should be completed on-line by visiting the Arts page on the Friends Academy website (<http://www.fa.org/arts>) before February 1, 2010. PIANO registration should be completed on-line before March 15, 2010. You will be billed by the Friends Academy Business office for the Audition Fees. If you do not have access to the website, then call Jesse Tennyson for a paper registration form. No late applications will be accepted.

Please email your child's music teacher if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Tracey Foster
Director of Arts

Sara Alt	sara_alt@fa.org
Dustin Bartley	dustin_bartley@fa.org
James Liverani	james_liverani@fa.org
Martha Regelmann	martha_regelmann@fa.org
Joe Romano	joe_romano@fa.org
Jesse Tennyson	jesse_tennyson@fa.org