

EL CERRITO HIGH SCHOOL
JAZZ ENSEMBLE

El Cerrito, CA



Saturday, February 3, 2024
12:00pm | Sacramento Convention Center



WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1108 Bissell Avenue | Richmond, CA 94801-3135

Office: (510) 231-1101 | Fax: (510) 236-6784

www.wccusd.net

Kenneth Chris Hurst Sr., Ed.D.
Superintendent

January 26, 2024

To the Members of the California All-State Music Education Conference:

As Superintendent of the West Contra Costa Unified School District and on behalf of the WCCUSD School Board I wish to applaud your selection of the El Cerrito High School Jazz Ensemble to perform at the California All-State Music Education Conference. We are thrilled at this incredible honor and would like to thank you for the opportunity this will afford our students. It is with great pride that I extend congratulations to the students on this outstanding accomplishment.

Special thanks must go to El Cerrito High School Director of Bands Keith Johnson for his innumerable efforts on behalf of our students. By continuously seeking to improve his program, Keith embodies the love of music that he vitally sparks in his students. The practical rewards of his teaching spread far beyond Jazz Ensemble and high school. Keith's students learn to learn with passion, a quality that will serve them well.

I would like to thank CASMEC for honoring WCCUSD students by inviting the El Cerrito High School Jazz Ensemble to perform at the conference. We are appreciative of the professional music education organizations that help keep the arts as an essential part of our public school system. Your selection of the ECHS Jazz Ensemble confirms our commitment to restoring rich curricular and co-curricular opportunities throughout our district. We believe this is a fundamental part of a complete education.

Our school district is proud of these students and we hope you will enjoy what promises to be an outstanding performance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth C. Hurst Sr.".

Kenneth C. Hurst Sr., Ed.D., Superintendent

PROGRAM

Kopi Luwak Alan Ferber

Publisher: Alan Ferber

Grade: 6 | \$60.00

She Won't Look Back Anthony Wilson, Arr. Alan Ferber

Publisher: Alan Ferber

Grade: 4 | \$60.00

Easy Money Benny Carter

Publisher: Sierra Music Publications

Grade: 4 | \$65.00

Blood Count Billy Strayhorn

Publisher: Essentially Ellington

Grade: 4+

Angel's Landing Alan Ferber

Publisher: Alan Ferber

Grade: 4 | \$60.00

Nutville Horace Silver, Arr. Bryan Kidd

Publisher: FJH Music Company

Grade: 3 | \$65.00

Straight Ahead George Stone

Publisher: Walrus Music

Grade: 5 | \$60.00

ECHS BANDS

Located in the East Bay of the San Francisco Bay Area, El Cerrito High School holds a proud history of musical excellence that dates to the school's opening in 1941. The band program at El Cerrito High School offers students the opportunity to develop their skills and passion for music through a variety of experiences that include performances, clinics, festivals, and travel opportunities. The program is comprised of three concert bands: the Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Concert Band as well as three jazz bands, the Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Workshop, and Jazz Lab. In addition to our classes, the program also offers several extra-curricular ensemble opportunities that include the Gaucho Band and Jazz Combos.

Since 1965 the El Cerrito Jazz Ensemble has been recognized as one of California's top high school jazz bands and has performed in venues throughout the United States and abroad. Led by El Cerrito alumnus, Keith Johnson, the El Cerrito Jazz Ensemble has earned top ratings and first place awards at numerous jazz festivals across the west coast and have been finalists regular finalists at Monterey's Next Generation Jazz Festival. Over the past 10 years the group has hosted and performed alongside prominent jazz artists that include Chris Potter, Wycliffe Gordon, Alan Ferber, John Daversa, Donny McCaslin, Eric Harland, and Terell Stafford, among others. Notable performances include appearances at the Monterey Jazz Festival, North Sea Jazz Festival, Montreux Jazz Festival, Jazz à Vienne, and Umbria Jazz Festival. The El Cerrito Jazz Ensemble has twice been selected as featured performers for both the CMEA Bay Section Winter Conference (2020 and 2024) and California All-State Music Education Conference (2014 and 2024).

Throughout its 60-year history the El Cerrito High School Wind Ensemble has received superior ratings at local and state festivals and has been recognized as one of the San Francisco Bay Area's top high school wind bands. The band has made regular appearances at the California Music Educator's Association (CMEA) State Band and Orchestra Festival and has performed in venues and cities across the country including San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Vancouver. Notable performances include Carnegie Hall in New York City (2015), Chicago's Symphony Hall (2017), and the 2018 California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC) in San Jose where the group was selected as a featured performing ensemble.



ABOUT OUR GUEST

Multiple GRAMMY-nominated trombonist/composer **Alan Ferber** has been called “one of the jazz world’s premier composers and arrangers for larger groups” (AAJ-NY) and was recognized as 2022’s winner of Down Beat magazine’s International Critics’ Poll for Rising Star trombonist. He has released nine albums as a bandleader, most recently featuring his celebrated nonet called Alan Ferber Nonet: Up High, Down Low on Sunnyside Records. This record follows a larger ensemble release, Alan Ferber Big Band: Jigsaw, which was nominated for a 2018 GRAMMY Award in the ‘Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album’ category.

Ferber’s aesthetic prescribes a deep knowledge of the jazz tradition as a means toward meaningful innovation. Appropriately, the Wall Street Journal describes his music as “somehow both old school and cutting edge.” He recently released his ninth album as a bandleader in July of 2023 titled Alan Ferber Nonet: Up High, Down Low on Sunnyside Records. In a review, Stereophile magazine describes Alan as being “born to the (nonet) format” and continues with, “Ferber the bandleader has one of the world’s best trombonists in his nonet: himself.”

Ferber has been a collaborator with artists including Esperanza Spalding, Miguel Zenon, Louis Cole, Charlie Hunter, Lee Konitz, John Hollenbeck, and Dafnis Prieto (with whom he won a ‘Best Latin Jazz Album’ GRAMMY Award in 2018). He has recorded extensively in other genres with artists including Peter Gabriel, Paul Simon, Sufjan Stevens, The National, and Dr. Dre. He has written and arranged music for an array of artists and media, including the Brussels Jazz Orchestra, Broadway star Shoshana Bean, the Taipei (TPO) Big Band, jazz vocalist Sara Gazarek, and the hit video game, Valorant. As a producer, Alan worked on the highly acclaimed GRAMMY-nominated large ensemble albums Real Enemies & Dynamic Maximum Tension by composer Darcy James Argue, among others.

As an educator and mentor, Alan currently serves as the Associate Director of the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop in New York City, a reputable incubator for emerging big band composers. He also teaches on the faculties of New York University and Montclair State University, and is the coordinator for the summer jazz intensive at the New England Music Camp in Sidney, Maine. Alan endorses Conn Selmer instruments and plays King trombones.

THE DIRECTOR

Keith Johnson serves as Director of Bands at El Cerrito High School and lecturer of music at California State University, East Bay as conductor of the CSUEB Wind Ensemble. A San Francisco Bay Area native, his career as a music educator spans two decades with experience at the middle school, high school, and collegiate levels. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in music and a Master of Arts degree in music education with an emphasis in wind conducting from San José State University.

Keith has been the recipient of various teaching honors that include the El Cerrito High School Teacher of the Year (2020), CMEA Bay Section's Outstanding Jazz Educator Award (2018), KRON 4 Teacher of the Week (2016), CMEA Bay Section's Outstanding Music Educator Award (2014), and the West County Ed Fund's Teaching Excellence Award (2014). In 2014 he was also recognized as the West Contra Costa Teacher of the Year. Groups under his direction have received multiple awards and performed across the United States and Europe in venues that include Carnegie Hall in New York, Chicago's Orchestra Hall, the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., and at several international jazz festivals including Jazz à Vienne and the Montroux, North Sea, Umbria, Victoria, and Monterey jazz festivals.

Since arriving to El Cerrito High School in 2009, the ECHS Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble have been featured ensembles at the California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC) in 2014, 2018, and 2024. Prior to joining ECHS, Keith held positions as jazz director at Portola Middle School in El Cerrito, CA and later director of the Jazzschool Young Musicians Program at the California Jazz Conservatory. As program director at the CJC, Keith founded and directed the award-winning Jazzschool Studio Band, recipient of four national Downbeat Magazine Student Music Awards and winner of the "Large Jazz Ensemble" category in 2011.

In addition to his teaching commitments Keith works frequently as an adjudicator, clinician, and guest conductor throughout Northern California and has served on the boards of several professional music education organizations including the California Music Educators Association (CMEA), California Alliance for Jazz (CAJ), and is a Past President of CMEA Bay Section.

BAND MEMBERS

SAXOPHONES

Nigel Weiss *Alto 1*
Sean Fivian *Alto 2*
Javier Gutierrez *Tenor 1*
Julian Rosenthal *Tenor 2*
Kenji Malaowala *Baritone*

TRUMPETS

Linden Stacey *Lead*
Sam Schweitzer *Trumpet 2*
Brenna Moore *Trumpet 3*
Matteo Diaco *Trumpet 4*

TROMBONES

Arvid Pokhrel *Lead*
Lucy Lebeck *Trombone 2*
Amelia Harrington *Trombone 3*
Benjamin Dutta *Bass*

RHYTHM SECTION

Isaac Satzman *Drums*
Guy Gibson *Bass*
Henry Clayton *Bass*
Evan Steinkoler *Piano*
Willow Bown *Guitar*



THANK YOU!

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the **2022-23 ECHS Jazz Ensemble**, whose recordings from their 2023 summer European tour provided the opportunity for us to play here today!



FLUTE

Jasmine Tavassolikhah

SAXOPHONES

Jacob Mayer
Kenji Malaowala
Reese Roberts
Julian Rosenthal
Nigel Weiss

TRUMPETS

Rika Adam
Lauren Bjeldanes
Sam Schweitzer
Linden Stacey
Sean Stokowski

TROMBONES

Lucy Lebeck
Johan Phan
Jeremy Rosenfeld
Dechen Yangjor

RHYTHM

Oliver Easton
Guy Gibson
Evan Steinkoler
Orion Moon
Isaac Satzman

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Kate Bloomer, ECHS Assistant Principal
Jacob Gran, ECHS Assistant Principal
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ECHS Counseling Department
El Cerrito Band Association

EL CERRITO AREA SCHOOLS

Tiffany Carrico, Director of Bands, Korematsu Middle School
Christian Manzana, El Cerrito Area Elementary Band Director
Jane Magid, El Cerrito Area Elementary Band Director

CLINICIANS

Dr. Aaron Lington, Coordinator of Jazz Studies, San Jose State University
Terell Stafford, Director of Jazz Studies, Temple University
Chris Potter, Professional Musician
Alan Ferber, New York University
Arnie Co, New York University
Dave Gregoric, Mills High School



WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS DEPT.

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Chris Read

Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator

January 26, 2024

To the Members of the California All-State Music Education Conference:

As the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator for West Contra Costa Unified School District and on behalf of our entire VAPA Dept., I'd like to congratulate the El Cerrito High School Jazz Ensemble to be selected to perform at the California All-State Music Education Conference – what an opportunity and tremendous honor! Great job to these talented students for their outstanding accomplishment! We are so proud of them.

A special thanks to Keith Johnson, the Director of the El Cerrito High School Bands. His tireless efforts in nurturing the love of music in our students does not go unnoticed. Keith's passion and commitment shine through, creating a positive impact that extends beyond the Jazz Ensemble and high school. We look forward to the future for this group of talented musicians.

I want to also express gratitude to CASMEC for inviting our talented students to showcase their skills at the conference. Your selection of the ECHS Jazz Ensemble reflects our commitment to providing enriching opportunities throughout our district – a vital aspect of a well-rounded education.

I am immensely proud of these students and Keith! I invite you all to enjoy what promises to be an outstanding performance. Cheers to the El Cerrito High School Jazz Ensemble and the bright future ahead!

Warm regards,

CR



WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
EL CERRITO HIGH SCHOOL 2023-24

540 Ashbury Ave. El Cerrito, CA 94530
Telephone (510) 231-1437 ∞ www.wccusd.net



Dr. Chris Hurst
Superintendent of Schools

Malcolm Norrington, Principal
Jacob Gran, Assistant Principal
Monica Ng, Assistant Principal
Kate Bloomer, Assistant Principal

January 24, 2024

To the Members of the California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC):

As the proud Principal of El Cerrito High School, I am honored to serve and support Mr. Keith Johnson and the ECHS Band members. Our ECHS band has grown into an internationally recognized program and has represented our community with class, respect, and humility. The El Cerrito community is proud of the ECHS band program, and they join me in congratulating Mr. Keith Johnson and the students in the ECHS band program.

It is a distinct honor for the ECHS band program to be selected to perform at the California All-State Music Education Conference. This honor is a testament to the hard work, dedication, talent, and level of commitment of Mr. Johnson and our ECHS students. Mr. Johnson and our students work tirelessly and go above and beyond in order to maintain the level of excellence required to be an elite music program.

Mr. Johnson holds the members of the ECHS Band to high standards and consistently models the behavior that he expects. Students don't get to this level of excellence in education if they don't have an instructor with strong content pedagogy. Mr. Johnson consistently maintains high expectations and provides instruction, support, tools, and resources that support students in meeting those expectations.

Thank you for honoring Mr. Johnson, the ECHS Band, and our illustrious performing arts program at El Cerrito High School. I want to thank the members of CASMEC for honoring and celebrating our music program. You are not only providing a community the opportunity to celebrate our educators, students, and parents but you are giving our students an experience that they will remember for the rest of their lives. To be the only jazz group invited to perform at a national music conference catapults the ECHS music program to an elite status that is only occupied by a few. Thank you for the recognition, and congratulations to Mr. Johnson and the members of the ECHS Jazz Ensemble. We are honored to share the stage with all of the performers and we celebrate them as well.

With Gratitude,

Malcolm Norrington
Principal
El Cerrito High School



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Member

Jan 26, 2024

To the Members of the California All-State Music Education Conference:

My name is Leslie Reckler and I am honored and humbled to be both a West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) Trustee and the parent of two children who have been enrolled in the various band programs at El Cerrito High School.

I have been involved in the District since 2005, and have watched Keith build this award-winning, nationally/internationally-known program from **literally** nothing. The longtime financial struggles of the WCCUSD are, unfortunately, known statewide, and Keith came to the District while it was climbing out of bankruptcy. There was no band program to speak of and no money to build one. His arrival was further compounded by the The Great Recession of 2008 and its aftermath. Through the most fiscally challenging times that you can ever imagine, he always had a vision that he could create a rigorous program focused on unrelenting excellence and commitment to the highest of standards, student responsibility and agency, an everlasting love of music, and the ability to build a tight and respectful community for students and parents alike.

I cannot say more about Keith's ongoing commitment to students, families and music, and his tireless dedication to building a model program where students thrive. The program's yearly calendar is packed with domestic and international trips, concerts, competitions, special guests, and events for families. To build back into the elementary grades, he hosted weekly rehearsals for grade school students. He is largely responsible for the creation of the Area Festival, where musicians from all of our local schools (elementary, middle, high school) showcase their talents.

My son, a graduate of the program, played all throughout college, and my daughter, about to graduate, is planning a college music minor. Many other graduates are planning or pursuing studies in music at the higher level, and many are now employed in music-related fields.

What you'll hear today is our community's special treasure built on a shared vision, unwavering commitment to excellence, and years of hard work and dedication. We are delighted to share it and THANK YOU!!! for showcasing them today.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie Reckler".

Leslie Reckler, Trustee