

Summer Parks and Rec Programs can be a Fruitful Recruitment Opportunity

Contact your local school music dealer to collaborate on offering a pre-band, pre-strings, pre-vocal, etc., summer program through your school's closest Parks & Rec facility. Parents love to enroll their students in these summer Programs (judo, basketball, dance classes, etc.) to keep their children busy over the summer break. This is an ideal time to introduce instrumental music to new students who will be attending your school this coming fall or those who may have missed the window to sign up for music last fall.

Give the classes a fun name and description to entice the young people to sign up. Choose music that the students might already know and easy to learn to help guarantee a successful experience and offer the classes homogeneously. Teaching by rote might be just fine for this. Remember, this is not about teaching band—this is about providing a fun opportunity for kids to make music and, in the end, recruiting them to continue by enrolling them in a beginning music class when they come to your school. You won't want to let the students walk out of your final summer class without registering them for the fall.

Ask your local dealer to help with your recruiting efforts by:

- providing rental instruments for such a program
- providing a staff person to attend the classes to get to know the students, their parents, and to facilitate and enhance subsequent further enrollment in the fall
- providing photos of the students with their instruments at the end of the summer session(s)
- helping to offer a separate class for the instrumental music students already enrolled to keep them playing over the summer
- offering follow-up instruction at the music store to participants who may want to continue their study after their summer program experience

What about the funding?

- Parks and Rec Departments have a structure in place for programs like these to exist so some funding is already in place
- Parents are used to paying fees to have their students participate in Parks and Rec Programs
- According to a recent article from [K-12 Drive](#), several states are dedicating part of their Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds — provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act — to summer learning programs, according to a tracker from the National Conference of State Legislatures. (ed. California has 4.6B allocated for summer learning.)

Programs like this help build community partnerships and support students' emotional health. It all starts with contacting your local music retailer to gauge their interest in helping with growing your program. Make the call as soon as possible as Parks and Rec Departments are building out their summer programs at this very moment.