

Lydia de Leeuw

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Dear Search Committee,

I am writing to express my keen interest in the position of String Specialist as an Orchestra Instructor in your district. As a student at the University of Michigan dual-majoring in Music Education and Cello Performance (class of 2019), I have dedicated my time in school to teaching as well as developing my musicianship. I believe my experiences teaching with public schools, community programs, and summer camps have prepared me for this teaching position.

My most recent experiences student teaching at Pioneer High School and Saline Middle School have given me ample exposure to the daily commitments of a public school teacher, including planning instruction, monitoring student growth, managing classroom behavior, and assisting with administrative tasks. I have had the opportunity to study with master pedagogs Jonathan Glawe and Ben Culver while teaching students ranging from 5th graders in their first year of playing string instruments to high school seniors auditioning for music schools. The Saline schools have a uniquely high percentage of students with IEPs, with an average of 30% of students having planned accommodations in the orchestra classroom. Learning to balance the needs of diverse learners has helped me to grow as an educator in ways that I intend to continue as a music teacher in your district.

Having grown up with a community music program that shaped my upbringing, I have found it important to dedicate time and care to teaching with community organizations. Working with the Ypsilanti Youth Orchestra and Crescendo Detroit programs have shown me the difference that music can make in communities that do not have the same resources as affluent areas. These experiences have solidified my faith that every student has the potential to grow through studying music.

I have spent my past two summers as a teacher and counselor at the MASTA string camp in Howell, MI. This experience taught me how to balance caring for all needs of a student, including social, musical, and emotional, as well as their general well-being in regards to sleep and nutrition. I believe that lesson plans should consider the student holistically and I will ensure that the learning in my classroom accounts for all aspects of a student's development.

More than anything else, these experiences have strengthened my passion for teaching and left me hungry for more. While I believe that my background has prepared me to teach diverse students with compassion, dedication, and attention to pedagogy, I know that I will always continue to learn in order to offer the best education to every student.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Lydia de Leeuw