

**Interview between Dorothy Falarski (D) Tri-school Brass and Vocal  
Teacher and Vicky O'Bresly (V) HPC President  
10/12/11**

*V. Tell me a bit about your musical responsibilities for the schools?*

D. I've been the brass teacher at all three elementary schools in Piedmont for the past 8 years or so. I introduce all fourth graders in the district to trumpet and trombone, and this year have added a heritage-based vocal class and beginning violin/viola.

At the fifth grade level, I introduce baritone and French horn to the mix. I generally have around sixty to sixty five students at the fifth grade level and I feel responsible for encouraging and mentoring each one. I'm responsible for communicating with the brass families, with music colleagues, classroom teachers and administration, plus overseeing the maintenance of the brass instruments.

*V. How do you organize your schedule across the schools and what does your typical week look like?*

D. I'm employed part time in the district, so I'm only on the campuses four afternoons a week. Tuesdays I teach two fifth grades at Havens. On Wednesdays I teach fourth and fifth grades at Beach. Thursday, I teach two fourth grade classes at Havens and on Friday I'm at Wildwood for fourth and fifth grades.

*V. Can you tell me something about your background, especially before you became a music/instrumental/vocal teacher for our schools?*

D. I began classroom teaching at an age when most people consider retirement, but in a sense, I am retired already, having been a professional musician for many years. I had a pretty colorful career in rock and roll as a singer/keyboard player, touring here and abroad and recording several albums. Later, I composed music for theater, produced sound tracks for

commercials and educational programs and sang jazz in local clubs.

I retired from the industry in the early 80's, intending to be a stay-at-home mother, but somehow got drafted into writing for and coaching student productions, first at my daughter's school in San Francisco and later as a Piedmont parent volunteer. These experiences ignited a love of working musically with youngsters and I've been involved in some form of music education since.

*V. What has surprised you most about your work these past few years?*

D. That I haven't seemed to lose my enthusiasm for the students. I may have a little less stamina at this age, but the fact that my bolder adventures are behind me keeps me from wishing I were somewhere else. Having an opportunity to remain musically active with youngsters on a part-time basis keeps me young at this point. I wouldn't trade it.

*V. What do you feel most proud of from your work?*

D. That so many of my students remember me and some of the things I've taught, even those who haven't pursued music in later years.

*V. What would you like to see, in terms of your work, going forward?*

D. That our instrumental program remains sheltered in spite of the economic climate and that I can personally continue to foster a classroom environment where each child, regardless of inherent ability can participate actively in music.

*V. Can you tell me something about yourself that few people know, until now that is?*

D. When one of the albums I worked on was re-issued in '94, I suddenly became an Internet presence after decades of obscurity. Google "Dorothy Moskowitz" (my maiden name) and you'll be surprised. You can even hear me on YouTube and on Wolfgang's Vault. I was in one band that

opened for the *Velvet Underground* in Boston. I was in another band that opened for *The Who* in Paris.

*V. What are the best ways for people to find out what is happening with music and our students?*

A. This is timely and wonderful question. All the principals write music notes in their bulletins. All the music teachers send home memos. I personally post regular e-mails to my fifth grade families, but despite this, there are still inexplicable gaps. Maybe we need to revisit the idea of a CHIME Bulletin/Calendar that goes out to the school community or better yet, do some creative brainstorming.

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