



February 15, 2019

Mr. John Carr
Executive Director of Facilities
Yonkers Public Schools
One Larkin Center
Yonkers, NY 10701

Re: African Musical Instruments

John;

As has been discussed, next month I will be traveling to Burkina Faso in West Africa in early March and will be bringing back a number of musical instruments for the Yonkers Public Schools. The instruments are as follows:

- a. 4 djembes – These are the hourglass shaped drums and are professional grade instrument with calf skin heats.
- b. 2 box drums – These are drums the player sits on to play. They are simpler and normally are found in schools and churches as they are less expensive. They are especially prevalent in rural areas.
- c. 2 drums that are placed in the armpit and the tone is changed by tightening or loosening the strings with the arm.
- d. 2 bolafones – These are gourd xylophones where the different tones are made by using different sizes of gourds.
- e. 4 calabas' – These are like tambourines but are made with gourds. The sound pieces are cowrie shells. In 1900, cowrie shells were money and the size of the shell defined the value of the shell.
- f. 4 gourds with a net with pieces on it to shake and make sound.
- g. All of the drums use calf skin heads. Two extra heads will be provided in case there are replacements required.

I will also provide 500 bracelets to be given to student and staff involved with the instruments.

The instruments and bracelets are a donation with the intent to expose students to instruments native to West Africa. The value is between \$750 and \$1,000. The amount is not important. What is important is that the instruments will be used.

Eisenbach & Ruhnke Engineering has worked with the Yonkers Public Schools for about 15 years, working on many renovation projects. Since 2004, the goal of our firm has been to give back. Working on hospitals, schools, clean water, irrigation and even building a climbing wall at a youth camp has all been done to help improve lives of people in third world countries. At the same time, one way to share some of the culture of Africa with people in the US has been to

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provide African musical instruments to schools. This group of instruments is the fourth set being provided to public school districts. I have also been able to share about life in Africa with students in different schools.

If you have any questions, let me know.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Carr". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

President

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