

March 2019

SAVE THE DATES

May 15th

Spring Band Concert
Intermediate Band
Advanced Band

June 6th

Spring Concert
Grades 2, 4, 6, 8 Choruses
3rd Grade Recorders
Beginning Band

Remember that attendance at their concert is required as part of each student's music class grade

I would like to give a big **CONGRATS** to everyone who participated in the **Christmas Concert**. The students did an amazing job. The students all worked hard and it truly paid off.

Music Minute

Kindergarten

This was the first year that I ever had students in Kindergarten compose songs. They did a great job following directions to write their own songs and perform them on boomwhackers. Students recently learned about different sounds found in nature and different sounds made by machines. They used different musical instruments to imitate different nature and machine sounds. Next the students will be focusing on rhythm and one vs. two sounds per beat. They will also be doing a lot of movement and using instruments to help us feel the steady beat and rhythm of songs.

1st Grade

First graders have made small drums recently. They will remain at school so that we can use them in music class, but the students will be able to bring them home in June. They also recently composed songs in groups that they performed on boomwhackers. Composing is a project that I usually reserve for the older grades, but they were up for the challenge and did a great job. In the coming weeks, the students will be learning more about rhythms. Rests will be introduced, and they will be exposed to some very basic rhythmic notation.

2nd Grade

Mr. Maraca has brought us to 9 different countries so far this year, and I know of at least 2 more that he will be traveling to in the next month. The students seem to be having fun learning about songs, dances and games from

around the world. Recently they learned Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes (Heels) in Polish!

3rd Grade

We are finally starting our recorder karate! I know the students are very excited, and I am, too. We went over the correct way to play the recorders which includes not using too much air. Encourage them to use "whisper air" if they are sounding too loud or squeaky. They also have a packet of music. They will learn these songs and then they will have the opportunity to play them by themselves in order to earn the belt to be tied on their recorder. The songs increase in difficulty as we go, and I ask that students do not work ahead until they've earned the belt before it. A handful of students have earned their White belt already and the others are pretty much ready to earn them, also, we just run out of time in the class period. Students must remember to bring both their recorder and music packet to class each week as part of their music grade.

4th Grade

In second grade, students learned how music can be used to tell a story, for example with *Peter and the Wolf*, *The Nutcracker*, and *The Tale of the Mountain King*. Students will now build on that concept and will create their own stories based on instrumental music that they will listen to and interpret their own way. They have already listened to 8 different pieces of instrumental music and listed out different people, animals, places, emotions and activities that each song made them think of. Next they will

be pulling from those lists to create their own continuous story.

5th Grade

Fifth graders just finished their boomwhacker composition projects and now they are beginning to learn about Johann Sebastian Bach. They have read a little about his life and we've discussed what it was like during Bach's times. Then they will begin watching a historical fiction movie about Bach, titled *Bach's Flight For Freedom*.

6th Grade

Sixth graders are in the middle of watching *Singin' In the Rain*. We are discussing different types of musicals. We are watching the movie version. Once we are finished with that, we will watch clips of a few specific scenes from several live performance versions. We will compare and contrast the different performances, as focus on pros and cons of stage vs. movie musicals.

7th Grade

Seventh grade is now beginning to work on their boomwhacker compositions. We are currently reviewing rhythm patterns from previous years as well as adding a few new ones. Once we have a good handle on the new rhythms, the students will be broken in to groups to begin working on their compositions.

8th Grade

Eighth graders are working on creating their own Blues songs. They learned about the 12 Bar Blues back in fifth grade, and now they are creating songs in GarageBand. They are creating different tracks that follow the 12 Bar Blues pattern, and adding drums. Then they will learn about the format for writing blues lyrics and will add their

own lyrics to their songs. I am always impressed to hear how many completely different each student's song sounds even though they all follow the same chord pattern.

Beginning Band

Beginning Band is doing a great job learning their music. I am very impressed with how much they have learned already. Students should make sure they are still practicing all of their music. *Oy Vey Stomp* is sounding great! At our last band rehearsal, I gave them a challenge; each time they practice the song, I'd like them to pick one thing they think they can do better as their goal for the next time they perform it. *Mickey Mouse March* is also coming along nicely. My goal for this group in the future is to focus on less talking during band rehearsals. With how far they've come musically so far, I can't imagine how far they would be if we didn't spend so much time every rehearsal waiting for students to stop talking. They have been given a third song that we may begin looking at, *Preposterous Phosphorous Rhinoceros*. I have never given Beginning Band a third song before, and I think these students could handle it if we can just getting the talking under control.

Intermediate Band

Reason to Rock is turning into a really fun song for Intermediate Band. The percussion section works together to sound like a drum set to create the beat for the rest of the band. *Flintstones Meet The Jetsons* is really coming along nicely. The first section is sounding great. I encourage students to continue looking at the next part so that we can get moving along on it. *Do Re Mi* is the same. The beginning sounds great, and students need to continue practicing so that we can keep moving forward.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Spring Concerts

The odd number grades did a fantastic job at the Christmas Concert back in December.

Our Intermediate and Advanced Bands will perform their own concert on **May 15th**. They are already working hard on their music and I think it will be a really fun concert.

It will soon be time for the even number grades (2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th) to begin selecting and rehearsing their songs for the spring concert. The choruses will be performing on **June 6th** as well as the 3rd graders playing their recorders and our 4th Grade Beginning Band. As per the student handbook, all students in grades 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 are required to be there as part of their 3rd trimester music grade. I look forward to seeing everyone there!

Advanced Band

I am having a lot of fun listening to the students learn *Mah-Na Mah-Na*. It is a very difficult song and I can't believe how well it is coming along already. *Feed the Birds* is a bit of a challenge to focus on balance and style. It is very easy to play loud, but being smooth and soft is a lot more challenging. That is what students need to really focus on in this piece. *Safari* is a fun song with a lot of fun, upbeat percussion parts to keep us moving along.

