Music class at Montgomery

Across the nation March is known as Music in Our Schools Month. Every March I like to send home a letter about student learning as it pertains to music.

First and foremost, I want to let you all know what a pleasure it is to work with your children. I am constantly amazed of their abilities and interests. Although calamity days have slowed our progress in many areas, I’m confident that each class will continue to grow musically!

Personally and professionally I’ve continued to grow in order to better myself as a teacher and better the teachers around me. This summer I completed the second and final level guitar education training through Duquesne University. The resulting training has assisted in the education of the 5th & 6th graders as you will find in this newsletter. I have continued my affiliation with the HS special education department both to teach music and better learn to teach music to those students with special needs. This fall I attended the State Gifted Education conference to better acquaint myself with the needs of our gifted pupils. Finally, this winter I was a featured presenter at the National Technology Conference for Music Educators. Through this I was able to educate teachers on current methods of technology integration for music students.

Thanks for taking the time to read through this newsletter,

Marty Kral

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Music & Arts Advocacy

- Students who report consistent high levels of involvement in instrumental music over the middle and high school years show significantly higher levels of mathematics proficiency by grade 12
- Students involved in public school music programs scored 107 points higher on the SAT's than students with no participation (2002).
- The Arts teach many life skills including problem solving, reasoning, decision making, self-confidence, self-discipline, & teamwork.
- Many Universities offer scholarships (regardless of major) to students willing to perform in an ensemble.
- Students with a Comprehensive Arts Education have increased motivation to learn and engage in instructional activities.

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“A During the Gulf War, the few opportunities I had for relaxation I always listened to music, and it brought me great peace of mind. I have shared my love of music with people throughout this world, while listening to the drums and special instruments of the Far East, Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Far North, and all of this started with the music appreciation course that I was taught in a third-grade elementary class in Princeton, New Jersey. What a tragedy it would be if we lived in a world where music was not taught to children.” - General H. Norman Schwarzkopf

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A quick note about the upcoming building project in the district...

Regardless of your views concerning our impending vote this May, please take the time to research the plans for the growth of the Ashland City Schools. Although people differ in their support of the project, I truly believe we all have the students’ best interests in mind.

For more information visit: www.itstimeashland.com
What are Montgomery students learning this year in music class?

**Kindergarten**

Kindergarten involves a whirlwind of information for our students. In music class we are singing and moving much like one would imagine. I like to bring their classroom learning into music to help make some connections, so our songs deal with opposites, vowels, colors, hygiene, days, months etc. Students burn a lot of energy in class while learning both musical & life lessons.

**First Grade**

The first graders are a lively bunch. There is a huge amount of excitement, energy and thirst to learn. This year along with our singing and movement has included the very beginnings of rhythmic reading. We are attempting to keep a steady beat while creating music through singing, introductory instruments, and movement. They also currently hold the award for most wiggly & lost teeth in one year.

**Second Grade**

The second graders have the honor of entering the music room a mere forty minutes prior to recess. They are ready to explode, and I take full advantage of that energy. The main focus for this year is to gain a basic knowledge musical notation. The second graders can now tell you all the note names on the treble clef, and can also count out rhythms using whole, half, quarter and eighth notes – an amazing feat! These kids are on track to complete a hugely successful year.

**Third Grade**

The third graders have spent a lot of time honing their musical skills in style, notation & reading. We are finishing up a unit on past, present & future music. We compared the present to 50 years ago. We then took our observations to create the music of the future. Look for links to that on my website coming soon. We’ll finish the year with a brief introduction to the guitar, and a look at the orchestra for next year.

**Fourth Grade**

Our fourth graders get to enjoy the year learning through performance on the recorder. Some parents have already had the privilege of hearing their children create music on their recorders. If not, you’re in luck! They’ll be taking them home over spring break! Following Easter, we’ll learn about the various instrument families and look at opportunity they have to join band next year.

**Fifth Grade**

Much like last year, the fifth graders have been learning through performance in music. This year though is on the guitar. We are blessed at Montgomery with a classroom set of guitars for student use. Students have learned some basic chords and notes on the guitars. They will continue these skills next year in sixth grade.

**Sixth Grade**

Sixth grade began as a continuation of music education through the use of guitars. After Christmas, we shifted our focus to a combined music and art project. Students are studying a Grammy nominated artist. They are researching that artist’s life, as well as the world history surrounding his/her birth. They’re working in the computer lab to create a CD case. You’ll find these on display at this year’s Spring Arts Festival.

**Montgomery Music Calendar**

6th-8th Band Concert – March 17
Ashland Middle School – 7:00pm

Free Ashland Symphony Concert – March 19
AU Hugo Young Theatre – 4:00pm

Montgomery Choir Concert – April 19
Montgomery Gymnasium – 7:00pm

4th-12th Orchestra Concert – April 28
Ashland Middle School – 7:00pm

Spring Arts Festival – May 6-8
Ashland High School

FOR INFORMATION ON MUSIC GAMES, ADVOCACY & EDUCATION, VISIT MY WEBSITE: KRAL.EDUBLOGS.ORG