



Brookside Elementary Music 2019-20



Dear parents and guardians,

My name is Stefan Wolf and I am thrilled to be starting this year as the lead music specialist here at Brookside. I am excited to get to work helping your students learn skills that will help them to become a better musician, but more importantly, a well-rounded individual. I am writing this letter to provide you with some information about myself, my teaching philosophy, and what you can expect in the music room this year. Some students will have Ms. Abby Berry or Mr. Randy Edinger for music instead of myself, but you can expect similar structures and expectations in both rooms.

Teaching Philosophy

My primary goal as the music specialist is to help students become musically literate by the time they reach middle school. This is consistent with district curricular expectations. We will explore musical literacy through the seven modalities of music: singing, reading, writing, playing, moving, listening, and creating. Students will have the opportunity to explore music in most of these ways every single lesson. Through all of this, joyful music making will be kept at the forefront. We will have fun exploring, learning about, and most importantly, making music!

Assessments

Since the primary curricular goal in the music classroom is to help students become musically literate, assessments will take the form of transcriptions of known songs or original compositions using targeted elements (consistent with the district curriculum). You will see these assessments come home periodically (2-3 times per trimester) along with a reminder email containing visual and audio examples. When these come home, please take a moment to have your child perform for you and describe their work. The more they show and talk about their work, the more proficient they become!

Grades

Music grades will appear on report cards each trimester in three areas: singing, concepts, and instruments, as well as a behavior grade. We will be clear in the comments section as to what was assessed. To us, grades at the elementary level are simply another mode of communication to show parents progress in music class. If you have any questions about grades, please reach out. We are happy to explain the reasoning and talk with you about your child's progress.

Performance Opportunities

Being that the primary goal of our curriculum is to gain musical literacy through a structured, process-based approach, we will not do any grade-level programs. Our class time will be spent in the ways described above, which will enable students to apply their skills to other performance opportunities if they wish. That being said, there will be a couple of ways that students can apply their abilities: the Brookside Percussion Ensemble (4th/5th grade, more info sent home in October) and possible “informances” (opportunities for parents to see music class in an authentic setting) in the spring.

Throughout the year, we will send periodic information as needed when the occasion arises. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get a hold of either of us. Email is the easiest way to reach us, but we are also happy to make an appointment to meet at any time. Also, there is a wealth of information on my website about curricular goals and upcoming events at Brookside. Take a peek!

Please let either of us know if you have any questions. We are looking forward to a wonderful year here at Brookside!

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Abby Berry, Music Specialist *abigail.berry@ahschools.us*

Randy Edinger, Music Specialist

<http://tinyurl.com/brooksidemusic>