



1st Trimester Music Newsletter  
Blaine Elementary  
10-11

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<http://www.blaine.k12.wa.us/bes/class/mcoffey/index.html>

Hello Parent(s),

I hope everyone had a fantastic and relaxing summer. As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Email is the most reliable way if you need to speak with me asap.

**Educational philosophy:**

My main goal is to help students feel empowered as both musicians and lifelong learners. Your child will be learning to play instruments, dance, sing, compose, and perform on instruments. My goal is to give my students the skills and knowledge to be successful in a variety of musical settings, and the confidence to do so when encountering musical situations in their homes and community. With the Classroom Based Assessment in Music mandatory as of 2008, I want to give students the skills to be successful on the test.

**Units of Study:**

**All dates are approximate**

**Unit 1-Keyboards/East Indian music and performance preparation-all grades-  
Beginning of school through 12/17**

Review classroom rules, musical vocabulary, goals for the year. Keyboards will be used as a vehicle for reviewing/learning how to read notes on a G cleff staff for 3rd and 4th grade, and for learning about East Indian music for 5th graders. Fifth graders will learn concepts such as rhythmic cycle, theme and variations, and question/answer within Hindustani music. Each class will compose their own compositions which they will play on keyboards for their performance. Mid unit 3rd and 4th grade will shift to preparing winter/holiday music for their performance. **Expect testing for 3rd and 4th grade 12/3-10 and 5th grade 11/17-24.**

**Unit 2-Recorders-all grades- 1/3-2/17**

Students will learn basic recorder technique and apply the reading skills they learned in the keyboard unit to learning 1 or 2 songs. I will have recorders for sale the first two weeks of January at a fraction of the cost you would pay in the music store. There will be school recorders available during class time for students who can't purchase one. **Expect testing 2/8-17.**

### **Unit 3-Listening-Western Classical Instrument Families-All Grades 2/22-4/1**

Students will listen to recordings from the five instrument families of Western classical music. Students will learn note taking strategies and will be invited to take notes on what they hear in class for each family. At the end of the unit students will need to identify instrument families when played musical examples. **Expect the listening test the week of 3/28-4/1.**

### **Unit 4-Gamelan-All Grades-4/11-6/8**

Students will reinforce the years musical learning by playing Javanese gamelan. Gamelan is an ensemble of metal barred instruments, pot gongs, and gongs that comes from Java, Indonesia. **Expect testing 5/23-27.**

### **Music Website**

The music website is a great place for you and your student to visit to keep abreast of what we are doing in music. You will find descriptions for each unit, as well as study guides and grading rubrics. Your student's music for their performances is also there so that they can practice their songs at home. It can also be an invaluable place for your student if they are behind in music. I try to keep it updated, so visit it often.

<http://www.blaine.k12.wa.us/bes/class/mcoffey/index.html>

### **Classroom structure:**

Towards the end of the first unit students will be "sorted" into one of two Harry Potter houses, Ravenclaw or Hufflepuff. I would like parents to know that I don't promote the ideas in the Harry Potter books, but use this system as a way to quickly get kids into groups for grouping activities. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please don't hesitate to contact me. I also have an open door policy in my classroom. If you would ever like to visit and watch your child in music, feel free to stop by.

### **Music Bucks:**

Music bucks are my classroom reward system and are given to students for good attitudes, supporting their classmates, and proving musical skill acquisition. The bucks can then be traded in for a number of items which your student can tell you about. Students should bring an envelope to school which they will keep in their desk to store their bucks until they want to trade them in. Students have been told that they are responsible for their bucks and lost and washed bucks will not be replaced.

### **Choir:**

After eight years of doing choir as an addition to my regular contract, I have decided to take a year off to be more available to my growing family. Stay tuned for choir to return next year.

**Performance dates:**

**5th Grade-November 16th 1:30 p.m.-Blaine PAC-  
Music Of India**

Students will perform their own compositions based on East Indian music, played on keyboards.

**3rd and 4th-December 16th 1:30 P.M. Blaine PAC  
Winter and Holiday Songs**

**Extra Credit Project:**

I am now offering an extra credit project for students that would like to increase their effort grade in music by one point. **Project involves researching a musician, writing a paper on them, and presenting it to their class. Please understand that this is a music project and is completely under my guidance and approval.** To view and download the project rubric, go to my website and click on study aids. Rubrics are also available from me. If you have any questions about this project, please contact me well ahead of the project deadline. **Projects are due no later than Nov. 30th.**

**Attendance:**

Although I do not grade on attendance, students missing class typically have trouble meeting unit expectations, which can negatively impact their music grades. Due to the sheer number of students served in music, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to reschedule missed assessments. I try to make at least on day for make up tests, but this typically happens before school and it will be the parents responsibility to get their student here.

I greatly look forward to working with your student(s) this year and hope you will contact me if you ever have any questions or concerns regarding music class.

Musically Yours,

Mike Coffey