View Ridge Elementary Music

The Goetz Gazette

Welcome to this year’s first issue of the Goetz Gazette! This is your one stop shop for all things MUSIC at View Ridge Elementary School.

View Ridge Elementary Honoring its Veterans

This year’s Veteran’s Day Assembly will feature a slide show with pictures of View Ridge family members who have served in the military. If you would like your family member included in our slide show, please email the picture to Mr. Goetz at bsgoetz@seattleschools.org with the subject: **Veteran Photo** no later than **October 25th**.

Instrumental Music has started!

This is such an exciting time of the year as students are first learning how to play their instruments. Here are some tips for Beginning Band Parents on how to help your student with this new learning experience…

Guide for Parents of Beginning Band Students- How can you help?

Congratulations!  You have a child that wants to learn to play a musical instrument!  This undertaking will likely present challenges and bring great rewards.  As a parent, you want to help your child, but you may not know how to begin.   Research shows that parent involvement and support is an important factor for students to be successful in their learning; you can help, even if you have never played a musical instrument yourself.  You have already invested money renting or purchasing an instrument and supplies. What else can you do to help your child be successful?

1. **Help your child schedule practice.  Make regular practice an expectation from the beginning.**

Instead of asking “Did you practice?”  you can ask “Did you complete your practice goal today?”

* We know that the brain learns best by practicing frequently for short amounts of time.  Beginner players only need to practice assigned tasks for about five minutes, but they should do this work once or twice almost every day. Setting specific goals before starting is very important and leads to a sense of accomplishment.
* As students gain skills and knowledge practice periods can be longer, and perhaps less frequent.   Keep the focus not on how many minutes students are practicing, but what they are achieving.  Can they perform their weekly goal? If yes, they have practiced enough, if no, keep working.
* If a student does not practice at home, they are missing the key element of independent learning.  At school students are getting direct instruction and guided practice, but independent learning and problem solving is the goal for all of our learners.  This learning happens when students successfully practice at home.

2.  **Help your child access resources to facilitate their independent learning.**   When he or she says “I don’t know”, you can ask “How can we find out?”

* The method book contains all of the information students need to succeed with their goal.  Fingering charts and concept explanations and be found in the book when students are working to recall the weekly lesson from school.
* Encourage your child to explore other resources.  Do you have a friend or family member who can help?  Can you get information from Google or YouTube to help?  Sending a question to Mr. Goetz via email is also an option.

3. **Encourage your child when they are frustrated, as well as celebrating success**. This is not always easy.  “Wow that sounds great! I am really hearing your improvement!”  (Banishment to the garage to practice may not be a positive reinforcement).

* Always look for (listen for) the good!  In the beginning that may be difficult, but all sounds should be celebrated as progress and growth.  Make sure all family members are speaking as positively as possible about those beginning sounds.  Learning to play an instrument is “falling forward”  we succeed and grow through our mistakes.
* When your child is experiencing frustration and getting discouraged, help them to work through those feelings.  **Persistence is an important life skill,** music learning will reinforce this skill.

Finally, please let me know when frustration continues, or you feel your child needs more help.  I want to provide as much support as possible to ensure your child’s success.   It is going to be a great year!

Here is a link to a short video that does a great job of explaining what kind of processing is happening inside our brains when we play a musical instrument. Check it out!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0JKCYZ8hng>

**Why should you choose instrumental music? Playing an instrument...**

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| …develops reading and math skills…supports academic achievement…teaches problem-solving and teamwork | …promotes communication across cultures…adds enjoyment to learning…promotes community and a sense of belonging |

And above all: Music improves the quality of life!

What are we up to in General Music?

**1st Grade classes** are developing their understanding of pitch and rhythm. We have been enjoying a variety of vocal warm-ups that include following shapes with our voices, stories and the much loved slide whistle. This engages the head voice which we use for singing. We have been learning echo songs such as No More Pie and Down By the Bay. We have also been working on being able to hear rhythms and pitches inside our heads. Students will sing one phrase of the song, sing phrase two inside their heads, and then return to singing for phrase three. We mix it up to increase the challenge, which becomes a fun game. Our Move It! activities help students to understand musical form and expression along with contrasts such as light/heavy…strong/gentle….tense/relaxed

**2nd Grade classes** have been doing a quick review of concepts from 1st grade. We have been singing some familiar songs and some new ones as well, along with rhymes and student-created beat keeping games. My Aunt Came Back has been a big favorite lately along with the song/rhyme Do Your Ears Hang Low and Peep Squirrel. 2nd grade students have also recently started their literacy curriculum. Around the end of November students will be composing, reading and writing their very own rhythms.

**3rd Grade classes** have been diving into their rhythm literacy unit. Students have been able to take songs they have learned such as “The Bridge of Avingnon” and decode the familiar rhythms using rhythm syllables such as “Du” for a quarter note and “Du-De” for two eighth notes. Soon our 3rd graders will be challenged to decode a song that they have never heard before, which will test their mastery of their rhythm syllables for the quarter note and eighth note. In addition to learning a fun dance to go along with the song “The Bridge of Avignon”, students have also been learning some history about the bridge itself.

**4th Grade classes** are close to the point where they can decode songs they have never heard before using rhythm syllables. Mr. Goetz sings a phrase, and students are able to sing the melody with rhythm syllables. These classes will soon be ready to create their very own rhythm patterns, read the music for the songs we have already learned, and write their own music creations on the staff. During the month of September, we have been studying the music and history of France. We have used the rhyme 2-4-6-8 to teach both the tone and the bass hit on the tubano drums.

**5th Grade classes** have progressed in their music literacy curriculum to the point where they can now decode songs and rhythms they have never heard before on the spot. Mr. Goetz sings a phrase, and students are able to sing the melody with rhythm syllables. 5th grade students have been learning about music from France, including the folk song “The Bridge of Avignon”, Debussy’s *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and Ravel’s *Bolero*. Students last week analyzed how Ravel was able to create a sustained crescendo for the entire piece. We have also been using our drums to groove together in time with a steady beat with advanced rhythms, accents and auxiliary percussion.

Please return recorders to the music classroom.

Recorders belonging to students in grades 4 and 5 are ready to come back to Mr. Goetz’s room! Please give them a nice bath of mild soap and warm water before bringing them back if you have not already done so. Recorders will be collected in each teacher’s classroom (homeroom) and then I will collect the tubs from each classroom teacher.

Upcoming Music Events…

November 9: Veteran’s Day Assembly

December 13: Winter Concert 7:00 PM

4th Grade and 5th Grade Band, Orchestra, Choir and Guitar

Thank you!

**Mr. Goetz**

**View Ridge Elementary School**

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