

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy Spring (finally)! As always, things are moving very fast as we approach the end of a great 2017-2018 school year in music.

**1st grade** – This first year of Music and the Brain has been a great success! First graders have learned the beginnings of reading music and how to play songs on the keyboard from many different countries, and enjoyed musical activities that enhance learning in all areas. Now we are introducing songs that use both hands on the keys. Be on the lookout for an invite to a music family morning, where students will show you what they've learned.

**2nd grade** – To date, our second graders have learned how to play in an ensemble (a large orchestra) with their classmates using many of the instruments in the classroom. Currently, they are working on reading rhythmic notation (music notes) while playing drums and other percussion in small groups. As we move towards the summer, the second graders will be using a music program on the computers from Berklee College of Music to begin to learn how to read melody.

**3rd grade** – From playing blues music as a large orchestra, to working on harmony and chord theory, third graders have had a busy year in music. Right now, we are studying how to build major and minor chords, which is the kind of work you might see at the middle or high school level. Students will use this knowledge to play chord charts of today's popular music.

**4th grade** – In February, the fourth graders came to Instrumental Music to begin their studies on guitar. We started with the basics, like how to hold the guitar, how to identify the names of the strings, how to strengthen our fingers, and how to read a chord diagram. Now, we are working on our first song called "Best Day of My Life," and will video our performance when it is ready.

**5th grade** – This is a very special time for our fifth graders as we near the end of their time here as students. We are currently working on improving our guitar rhythm, playing skills with a classic song called "Beat it." At the same time, we are preparing for graduation and working on singing the songs you will hear at our graduation ceremony in June. Please remember that even as students graduate and move, my door is always open for questions regarding music, auditions, performance opportunities, and for students to keep in touch.

Thank you and please stop by room 220 on May 22<sup>nd</sup> for Parent Engagement.

Sincerely,

Mr. Meyers - Instrumental Music Teacher