Proposed Music Program
grades 1-8

Presented by: Mike Harris
November 19, 2015
Introduction

Approximately six weeks ago I had a serendipitous meeting with your Executive Director, Raj Solanki, while he and his family were looking at a house my wife was showing. As we shared our personal stories we discovered that we shared similar backgrounds, experiences and philosophies related to music and arts education. We immediately connected at a deep level and Raj invited me to explore Mountain Song Community School and its Music Program in order to determine whether or not I wanted to pursue a music faculty position. Given my consulting background, I did an initial mini assessment of the school’s vision, mission, values, goals, practices, and procedures for myself to determine if it was a good fit. Raj was kind enough to allow me to attend staff meetings, interview as many staff, faculty and parents as I could, and he provided me with links, reading materials and other information on Waldorf education.

With this snapshot assessment I became intrigued with the philosophy, energized by the challenges, and felt that I would at least be interested in exploring the position further. I then put together a brief proposal of a possible 3 year plan for a Music Program at MSCS to present to Raj and possibly the School Board for the October meeting. Given some other pressing issues the timing was not good for the School Board meeting and we both agreed that there was a need for a more thorough assessment with recommendations in order to move forward. At that time Raj commissioned me to do an in depth assessment with the following deliverables:

- An in depth assessment measuring the current status of the Music Program against the MSCS Charter, stated mission, vision and values, Waldorf Music and Arts philosophy and the Colorado State Educational requirements for Music Education.
- Recommendations of actions needed to comply with and move toward the above in a timely manner.
- A new mission, vision and values document.
- Proposal of new Music Program structure, goals and objectives (3 year plan).
- Document aligning Waldorf philosophy and developmental processes with the grade level expectations of the Colorado Academic Standards for Music Education.
- Proposal of needed staff with working job descriptions.
- Proposal of needed resources and equipment.
- Proposal of working budget to fund Music Program.

At this point it would be appropriate for you to know some of my background in order to lend credibility to the assessment. I graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor’s Degree in Music Education. In my major, I had a double concentration in voice and piano, a talent award to sing in Concert Choir and later a full scholarship to sing in a select ensemble that represented the school. I was also President of the Music Student Council.

Early in my career I had the privilege of serving in two alternative private schools. One, as the Music and Physical Education Teacher of a developing school in Texas, and the other as the Principal of grades 1-8 and teacher of Music, History, and Physical Education for grades 5-8 in an International School on the Big Island of Hawaii. So, along with you, I understand the opportunities and challenges of pioneering and developing a new school with an alternative approach to education.

Following these experiences I served as the Worship, Music and Performing Arts Pastor of two very large churches. My responsibilities included planning and leading worship; designing, leading and directing special musical and dramatic events; directing choir, orchestra, ensembles; and overseeing multiple staff including Children’s Creative Ministry Director, Youth Creative Ministry Director, Drama Director, and Technical Arts Directors. I managed 10 full time equivalents and 300-400 volunteers.
Later in my career I started my own business as an Executive Coach and Organizational Consultant primarily with churches and nonprofit organizations in the areas of Worship, Music and the Arts. As a consultant I was brought in to do a thorough assessment of the organization’s vision, mission, values, strategies, goals, plans, procedures, resources, staffing alignments and priorities. I would then assess the same in the Music and Performing Arts Departments and present my findings along with action plans for change and transition toward organizational health and effectiveness. Eventually this morphed into a specialty in Change and Transition Management, in which I helped to manage the departments through the transition, normally 6-18 months depending on the situation.

Throughout my career I have had a passion to capture the hearts, minds and imaginations of children and young people through music and the arts. Although it became rather dormant for some time, due to other responsibilities, it still warmed the embers of my heart. My meeting with Raj served to rekindle that passion and as the opportunity presented itself to use my background and skills to provide an assessment of your Music Program as outlined above it seemed right.

I am grateful to Raj for the opportunity to serve MSCS by doing this assessment, as well as his consideration of me for a music faculty position. Raj has asked me to provide the Board with the following document designed specifically for the MSCS Board of Directors meeting, November 19, 2014. I believe you have already received copies of the version given to the Finance Council for you to preview prior to the meeting. This version includes that information with a few additions to give you a clearer picture of a very possible and exciting future for the MSCS Music Program. It is my understanding that the Board will be determining in this meeting whether or not to move forward with the recommendation by the Finance Council to reallocate funds to hire a Music Director to create a Music Program that meets or exceeds the standards of the MSCS Charter, Waldorf inspired educational philosophy and Colorado Academic Standards for Music Education. I hope this document will be helpful to you in making that decision.
The assessment process includes the following:

- An in depth study of the MSCS Charter, culture, mission, vision, values, policies and procedures particularly as they pertain to Music and Arts Education. **(100% complete)**
- An in depth study of Waldorf educational philosophy **(85%–90% complete, always more to learn)** and Colorado State Education requirements as they pertain to Music and Arts Education. **(100% complete)**
- In depth interviews with Executive Director, Pedagogical (Curriculum) Director, Teachers and selected parents. **(80%–85% complete)**
- Teacher Survey **(85% complete w/9 faculty/staff responses)**
- MSCS emailed a link to a Music Program Survey to parents of all children enrolled, grades 1-7 (with an introduction and note from Raj). **(100% complete w/92 families responding to the Survey)**
- Observation of all classrooms during times of musical expression, rehearsal or study **(70-75% complete)**
- Inventory of all music resources including music books, music teaching aids, music equipment (audio/visual aids, computers and software) instruments, music stands, storage, and rehearsal and performance space. **(80% -85% complete)**
- MSCS provided Mike Harris with access to website, any printed or published material related to the school and particularly anything related to Music and Arts Education during its first two years of existence, and job descriptions of any previous Music and Arts staff, part time or full time. **(95% + complete)**

For the purposes of this Finance Council Meeting the following is a synopsis of the full assessment with recommendations for current and future staffing needs:

**Integration of Waldorf Philosophy, Methods and Practices with the MSCS Charter and Colorado Academic Standards for Music Education.**

- The pure Waldorf Private School approach, the MSCS Waldorf inspired Charter and CAS for Music Education mandate the integration of the arts into all curricula plus the guided development of artistic skill for all students throughout the grade levels. In addition the CAS for Music Education includes a general music education for all students PK-8 including 1) expression of music 2) creation of music 3) theory of music and 4) aesthetic valuation of music with opportunities for vocal and instrumental instruction, rehearsal and performance. Beginning in some schools as early as grade 3, (normally in grades 4-5) the schools provide experience and instruction for various ensembles, choir, band and/or orchestra. This presupposes the need for specialized teachers in general music, vocal music, strings/orchestra or other instrumental music, music theory, music history, and other elements of music education. In the lower grades (1-4) one person may cover all of these areas, and if they have both instrumental and vocal backgrounds (most do not) they may cover both beginning band/orchestra and choir. However, as a school expands to 5th grade and above you normally have a combination general music teacher/vocal director for all grades with responsibility for developing vocal ensembles, choirs and special music productions. In addition, there is usually at least a part time band/orchestra director for grades 5-8. Many Waldorf schools begin strings in grade 4, some actually in grade 3. As the school expands to a full Middle School there are normally at least 2 full time music teachers and/or several part time teachers with specialties in vocal and/or instrumental music.
• Some schools choose to go with part time music teachers with individual specialties for financial reasons (they don’t have to pay benefits) and they sometimes have greater expertise than a generalist. This can work initially in the lower grades, but both Waldorf and Public School educators caution that if the instructors are not well connected to the overall system the Music program loses continuity and forward movement. In addition, many good musicians and private teachers have little to no classroom management or group teaching ability. A prime example of this MSCS’s two attempts to create a string program with independent teachers, no general music instruction and no program guidance.

• I believe the most effective Music Programs are those with an overall Music Director who guides the program, is an advocate for music and the arts to the Board, Executive Director, faculty, parents, students and community and carries a major responsibility as a music teacher and ensemble director. This person carries the mission, vision, values and passion for the program as well as the responsibility for implementing it. They also have the knowledge, wisdom and professional network to bring on additional staff, oversee curriculum development, design music classroom and performance space and build and manage a budget. In addition they are a valuable resource to the main classroom teachers.

• The Denver Waldorf School began with a Music Director, with a strings specialty that has overseen the development of an excellent, extensive and well integrated Music Program K-12. They now have several other full time and part time instructors. Cynthia Fongillo, a Waldorf Music Educator with a specialty in vocal music, guided the development of a full K-8 Music Program, with vocal and instrumental programs. She has written an excellent Waldorf resource, “The Importance of Being Musical”, which I am using as one of my curriculum guides. In the private, public and charter schools some are using specialized programs, before or after school, to augment their Music Program. The Mozart String Program in Colorado Springs, for Grades 3-5, is an excellent example of that. There are a variety of approaches being used in Waldorf schools in Colorado depending on leadership and available resources. No matter the approach, it is my opinion that without a strong leader/advocate for the Music Program, the program is destined for mediocrity at best and catastrophe at worst.

• From the inception of MSCS, the Music Program was below the recommended standards for both Waldorf and CAS given that it started with 6 grade levels. The founders did an excellent job articulating the Waldorf inspired vision for integrating arts education into the main classroom with the desire to create a curriculum where music and the arts are not secondary but vital to the education of the whole child. However, in reviewing the action plans, the entire Music Program plan was unclear and incomplete. None of the Arts Programs were included in the integration of Waldorf with CAS as were the other disciplines. The staffing plan included 1 or 2 Music Teachers; orchestra and choir, each teaching ¼ to 1/3 time through 2018. To my knowledge the two previous string teachers were the only staff hired and for different reasons both were unsuccessful. There is no mention, that I could find, of a general Music Program for all students outside of the main classroom. The Curriculum called for introduction of choir, strings, music theory and reading music notation beginning in Fourth Grade. I assume that meant individual class choirs or a primary choir Grades 4-5. Grades 5 and 6 were supposed to have their own individual voice class or choir, and orchestra. Grades 7-8 would have both a Junior High Orchestra and Choir. None of that has materialized.

• The reality is that two part time ¼ - 1/3 teachers cannot cover what is required by either Waldorf inspired philosophy or the CAS with specialized grade level and multi grade classes. As mentioned above, you also run the risk of the problems you have already experienced with no program guidance.

• The attempts to create a string program, although well intentioned did not go well and were short lived. This along with no program guidance and very little planning probably set the development of a full Music Program back at least 2 years.
• The needed space for rehearsal and performance, purchase and storage of instruments, music materials and actual music has not been carefully thought through or planned for.

• There is a definite need for at least one full-time music faculty member and one part-time instrumental faculty member, or the hiring of the Mozart Strings Program for instrumental music, in order to get back on track with Waldorf inspired mandates, the Charter mandates and Colorado Academic Standards for Music Education.

• There is also the need for the reallocation of budgeted funds and an overall fund raising effort to supply the current and future needs of the Music Program. This would include reallocating space, space renovation or creating and/or purchasing new space for music classes and performances, the purchase of music, music equipment, music instruments and other music resources. This would also include the hiring of staff as needed for program mandates.

Teacher Feedback and Observations

• From my observations, conversations and the survey, there is a wide variety of teacher creativity and musical skill level as well as what is actually done in the classroom musically. This reveals the need for some basic guidelines, standards and training opportunities for all teachers to feel confident and prepared to creatively integrate music into the main classroom.

• All of the teachers who responded to the survey, and that I have spoken with, specified the desire and need for training in teaching children how to sing.

• All but one of the teachers who responded to the survey, and that I have spoken with, mentioned the need for instruction on playing and teaching the recorder.

• All of the teachers who responded to the survey, and that I have spoken with, would welcome a music specialist as a resource for: music in the classroom, help with programs and festivals, and to provide them with planning time by doing special music classes.

• All of the faculty and staff I have spoken with feel that MSCS needs a full Music Program to meet the Waldorf, CAS and MSCS Charter Standards with someone to guide and direct the program.

• All of this feedback from teachers communicates the need for a music specialist as a valuable resource for teachers as well as a needed colleague to help create the desired Music Program.

Parent Feedback

• By far the majority of parents in the school want a full Music Program for the children at MSCS, with opportunities for band, orchestra, choir, concerts and other musical offerings.

• Parents also want their children to learn music theory, music reading and music appreciation regardless of their talent levels vocally or instrumentally.

• The parents enjoy hearing their children singing and playing recorder in the main classroom, singing in the hallways, and singing on the playground, especially in the lower grades.

• Depending on the teacher, there are mixed reviews from parents of how well the teachers emphasize and are skilled at teaching music in the classroom.

• There is a lot of disappointment in parents of children, Grades 3-7 in the way the string program was handled, the fact that there is no longer a string program and that there appears to be no other Music Program or opportunities for their children outside of the main classroom.

• There is strong support for the development of a full Music Program by parents including helping in the classroom, participating in concerts and talent shows, chaperoning trips and in general being advocates for the Music Program.

• There is strong support for implementing the Mozart Strings Program after school.
Synopsis and Conclusions

After this comprehensive study and assessment of Waldorf educational philosophy, the Waldorf inspired MSCS Charter, the CAS for Music Education, the previous, current and desired Music Programs at MSCS, and wonderful feedback from parents, students, staff and administration it is my opinion that there is an immediate and urgent need to create:

- A renewed vision of Music permeating the atmosphere and energizing the heart and soul of Mountain Song Community School.
- A renewed mission of integrating music and arts education into the main classroom while creating a curriculum where music and the arts are not secondary but vital to the education of the whole child.
- A new Music Program structure with achievable objectives, goals and plans including general music education for all students, vocal and instrumental instruction and performing groups, concerts, talent shows and other special events.
- A newly designed curriculum which integrates Waldorf philosophy with CAS for Music Education that meets or surpasses all guidelines and requirements.
- A new assessment process for music achievement at all grade levels.
- A new system for resourcing and equipping teachers with general, age appropriate music for the classroom, music associated with main lesson themes and traditional Waldorf festival music.
- A reallocation of current and future budgeted funds to fund the Music Program.
- A new resource/fund raising strategy to meet Music Program needs not covered in the budget.
- A new Champions of Music Parent Organization to help spearhead resource/fund raising efforts, help with concerts, seasonal events, musicals and drama presentations, trips and to serve as classroom assistants.

I am working on documents to help create all of the above. Some of the documents will not be included as they are much too lengthy to be reviewed in a Board meeting and are intended for use by the Executive and Pedagogical Directors. The following documents are included:

“Why Music is Vital to the Education of the Whole Child”
“MSCS Program Mission, Vision and Values”
“Recommended Developmental Process of MSCS Music Program”
“Why Music is Vital to the Education of the Whole Child”

At Mountain Song Community School we believe that music is an essential part of the human experience. It is a universal language that gives form and expression to feelings, thoughts and creative imagination so rich with meaning that mere words cannot contain them. Music is a way of knowing, experiencing and communicating in both our seen and unseen worlds; in our hearts and interior worlds, with our friends, families and lovers, with people of all cultures, regardless of background and heritage, with all of creation… and with our creator. Music shapes our culture, gives voice to our deepest hopes and dreams, our moments of love, joy, excitement and celebration… and our moments of mourning, sadness, grief and despair. Music helps us to integrate our thoughts, emotions, imaginations and beliefs into expressions that help us communicate and experience our world as whole human beings. This language of the soul gives voice to the heart, creative structure to the rhythms of life and wings to the spirits of all humanity.

The founder of Waldorf educational philosophy, Rudolph Steiner, believed that music was a dynamic part of the creative force and process that shaped the universe and filled it with beauty, wonder, and joy. He also believed that the integrating power of music and the arts enhances the biological, physical, emotional and spiritual development of human beings. This belief is central to Steiner’s philosophy of developmental process, the structure of his system of education, the integration of the arts into the main curriculum, and his insistence that music and the arts be considered an essential and non-negotiable element of whole person education. In his view music and the arts play a vital part in the humanization of mankind and are therefore vital to the education of the whole child.

Steiner dedicated his life and substantial resources as a well-respected scientist, philosopher, lecturer, social reformer, architect, and education pioneer to improve the lot of mankind. In addition to many other achievements he developed an integrative, holistic, scientific and emotionally intelligent philosophy and approach to human development and education. His conclusions regarding the development of the right and left hemispheres of the brain, the functioning of the cognitive and affective domains and the tendency for the brain to develop integrative pathways through experience, exploration and expression of the arts were way ahead of his time. Subsequent scientific, psychological, sociological and educational studies have both validated and expanded Steiner’s original work.

Over the past two decades extensive studies have shown that arts integration into public, private and charter school curriculum has produced extraordinary results in both quantitative and qualitative learning. In addition, students who participate in ongoing music and arts education programs and performance groups over prolonged periods of time have shown significantly higher development in social skills, language and communication arts, math, quantitative analysis, and cross discipline reasoning ability needed for careers in leadership, government, policy making, research and development. Our MSCS Charter, which can be found online at mountainsongschool.com is full of references quoting these and other findings related to arts integration and the centrality of music and arts education. Here are some other exciting quotes from a report by music educator and arts advocate Tim Lautzenheiser:

“We are on the cutting edge of breakthrough mind-research concerning “how the brain works.” With the improvement of technology we can now watch the mind creating an endless (and infinite) network of dendrites (maps-of-learning) as the neurons continuously fire establishing an ever-growing structure supporting the learning process. It is believed music learning activates various areas of the brain and synchronizes the mind for learning at a fast pace while stretching the memory to a higher level of retention. (Sounds like Steiner) Music enhances cognitive learning and facilitates growth in many areas of human development, i.e., motivation, social skills, time management, situational awareness, aesthetic appreciation, etc. As we learn more about the integration of emotional intelligence and cognitive learning patterns, it is ever apparent the
study of music has a direct relationship to the measured success of the individual/student via reasoning, creative thinking, decision-making, and problem solving.”

“Arguably no other discipline in school can better prepare the mind and spirit for the challenges of, medical study, law school, classes in engineering, education/teaching, business college, etc.”

“Music, by nature, triggers both the cognitive and affective mind. Not only does the young artist experience the input of facts and figures, but he/she simultaneously develops an appreciation for art.”

“Parents must know there’s far more to music than buying an instrument, taking private lessons, adding music class to the school schedule, and rehearsing for a concert. Being a musician maps the human mind for success; success in all avenues of life. The learned skills needed to excel in music are transferable to every academic subject. Playing a musical instrument creates a multi-dimensional template-of-quality adaptable (and applicable) to every personal and professional challenges.”

These quotes, and hundreds of others like them, coming from verifiable research and reputable communicators are making their way into the discussion rooms and offices of those who make policy, establish educational standards and make decisions on what educational programs are accredited, promoted and funded. Studies are showing that schools which have cut or eliminated arts programs in favor of a heavy emphasis in science, math, language skills and technology have literally shot themselves in the foot over time. Student scores and demonstrated ability to excel in these areas have not been sustainable and in many cases have decreased with the exodus of these arts programs.

No one is arguing the need for excellent education in the above areas. They are important to meet the multifaceted challenges of today’s world. However when the arts and humanities are deemphasized, the foundation upon which these important areas are built crumbles in education, society and the development of whole human beings. They are not only the foundation but the heart and soul of what it means to be fully alive. When educated appropriately these students will not only excel but will become creative forces in the arts and sciences. Discoveries in the biological and physical sciences will be utilized for the good of mankind led by those who have been exercised and trained in a well-balanced, fully integrated, developmentally appropriate, formal and informal educational environment with the arts at the heart.

At Mountain Song Community School we believe your child was “Made to Make Music”. Our commitment to you is to provide the best Music Program possible with the resources we have, and that will be provided through our Music and Arts Champions, to help them explore, experience and express this wonderful gift of music. We consider ourselves stewards of the gifts entrusted to us and will do our best to lead, guide, encourage, equip and develop them with wisdom into the best Music Makers they can be. Thank you for entrusting us with this treasure.
Vision, Mission and Values

**Vision:** “Music from the Heart” or “Made to Make Music” - I envision a vibrant, imaginative, creative and skilled community of budding young musicians and music lovers awakened, inspired and challenged to realize their full potential in music. Encouraged, motivated and guided by a supportive community of passionate and engaged parents, teachers, music educators and professionals, these young people will be provided with the love, support, experiences and resources necessary to create and express music from the heart.

**Mission:** My desire is to create and develop a dynamic, comprehensive Music Program for Mountain Song Community School that embodies and supports the integrated arts approach to the main classroom as well as specialized music training and expression. By integrating traditional Waldorf methods with the Colorado Academic Standard for Music Education our young people will leave MSCS with a lifelong love of music and will be well prepared for the transition into other charter, public or private school music programs.

**Values:** The following are values that shape our thinking and practices

**Spirit/Heart** - We encourage our students, faculty and families to discover the unique spirit/heart of the child as it unfolds and its vital connection to the rest of humanity. As Richard Rohr expresses it, each child contains an “immortal diamond” that is uniquely human and divine as a part of their inner being that is meant to be discovered, gratefully received, treasured, unveiled and offered in a spirit of humility. In many, music is one of, if not the primary expressions of this part of one’s inner being.

**Respect for Self and Others** – Every individual contains this immortal/human/divine spirit that is meant to be respected, treasured, encouraged, cultivated, and drawn out by a growing self-awareness and self-respect along with the love, compassion and respect of others. Because of the deeply personal and tender nature of the heartfelt expression of music, it is very important that from an early age that our children and young people experience and are taught how to express that kind of respect from parents, teachers, mentors and fellow students by example and discipline.

**Imagination** – The Waldorf philosophy encourages the awakening, engaging and developing of the imagination of children as a foundation of fertile soil in which seeds of sights, sounds, melodies, phrases, harmonies and rhythms are planted. In this way education becomes more “organic. As the child receives these seed elements of music they resonate within them and their bodies spontaneously begin to move, dance, sing and play. Much like the development of a language, the child first hears the sounds, experiences them and eventually begins to make his first unintelligible sounds. Then with encouragement, mimicking, and a lot of practice, they begin to make their first understandable sounds and eventually begin to associate sounds with words, notes and melodies. As they listen to stories and fairy tales imaginatively expressed, their incredibly creative minds begin to associate words with feelings, difference of pitches - highs and lows, loud and soft, start and stop. They then begin to associate sounds with moods, pitches, phrases and dynamics, and the creative imagination takes flight through expressive singing and composing.

**Creativity** – The development of confident, creative expression is best formed in an atmosphere of love, security and freedom with appropriate boundaries. In our Music Program the young people are encouraged to create their own melodies and rhythms by singing and playing simple instruments even before they know the notes. Exploring, discovering and becoming comfortable with their own voices and instruments encourages the development of the musical ear and creative imagination. With this as the foundation they are being prepared to improvise and compose music as they begin the study of music reading, music theory, solo and ensemble singing and playing. Ear training, expression and theory are then appropriately combined, and the ability to creatively and imaginatively express themselves musically is greatly enhanced.
Age Appropriate Skills Development – Rudolph Steiner, the creator of the Waldorf educational philosophy, had some very specific ideas about the age a child should begin music education informally and formally: when and how they should begin singing, when and what instruments they should begin with, the sequence of instruments they should move to, when they should begin their study and practice of harmony, music reading, music theory, music history, acoustics, composition and aesthetics and various ensembles. While keeping with the spirit of Waldorf inspired developmental processes our curriculum and instruction will be integrated with the Colorado Academic Standards of Music Education as well as other best practices.

An Eclectic, Multicultural and International Approach to Music History, Music Literature, Musical Styles and Music Performance – While laying a solid foundation with the practices of Western European styles of performance and production on which the Waldorf approach to music is based, we will also explore the music of other cultures in conjunction with the main lessons as well as study and perform a wide variety of time honored and contemporary styles. We will use multiple ensembles, both vocal and instrumental, for the experience and expression of as many genres of music as possible given our resources.

An Appropriate and Balanced Approach to the use of Recorded Music, Video Presentations and Music Software in the School and at Home - Because of the dehumanizing social and educational effects of the overuse of technology and media, MSCS has asked parents to limit the use of media at home to the weekends. In traditional Waldorf schools visual and audio media are rarely, if ever, used in the school because of the belief that whole person education is best served through the imparting of wisdom and knowledge directly from teacher to student. The thought is that there is a greater emotional, psychological physical and spiritual connection and transfer of creative energy from a live person than a mechanical recording or representation. This presents a bit of a dilemma for music educators as much of the world’s music would not be accessible to most students without the use of recordings. There are also many invaluable aids and supports for teachers, students and parents of musical software, electronic instruments, online learning and excellent recordings of great music.

While remaining true to the spirit of the Waldorf approach, many Waldorf inspired schools are taking a modified approach to the use of media in the classroom and at home. Continuing to emphasize the role of the teacher and live performances, some media are used to enhance the learning process. We believe this is responsible use of media and will be using some in the classroom as well as in some homework assignments. However, due to the present overuse and abuse of media, we will remain cautious and conservative in our use of it in music education at MSCS.
Possible Developmental Process of MSCS Music Program

2015 Current Program

The only music education available at the school right now is done by classroom teachers.

- Singing or playing recorder during circle time in early grades.
- Teaching some songs vocally or instrumentally in conjunction with the main lesson.
- Some extra time spent learning to play recorder and singing new songs which varies with each teacher’s ability and musical background.
- Seventh graders have purchased ukuleles and are learning to play in designated music times in class.
- Limited music and other resources for teachers and students in class to play recorder, learn how to read music and perform.
- Both teachers and student are doing a very good job with what they have but are limited by time and resources. The teachers I have spoken with are all asking for help.
- Sadness, discouragement and some frustration of parents, students and teachers over the way the string classes were taught, the disbanding of the string program and the loss of investment in instrument rental and/or purchase.

Remainder of 2015 - 2016

- Music Director supports classroom teachers by researching and providing new songs, seasonal songs, festival songs, recorder music and training materials and workshops. The desire is for the Music Director to become a major resource for the classroom teachers.
- Assessment of entire student body’s current music status and aptitude through parent/student questionnaires, phone and in person meetings; individual and group singing, playing recorder, playing ukulele and playing other instruments the young people are studying privately.
- A minimum of one special music class per week per class.
- Possibly going to 2 classes per week in grades 3-7, 1 vocal, 1 instrumental, both with theory, music reading, sight singing and playing (recorders).
- Grades 3-5 all participate in the Link Up program October-February sponsored by Carnegie Hall and the Colorado Springs Philharmonic. This is an excellent program in which we will be teaching all of the kids basic music reading skills, vocal and soprano recorder technique, (possibly some strings depending on the level of student ability), learning the instruments of the orchestra and attending the culminating Link Up concert at the Pikes Peak Center with up to 1700 other students and teachers. The concert is fun and interactive and the students will be invited to sing, play and dance along with the orchestra. There is also a field trip to visit the Philharmonic October 22. (May not be possible now due to late enrollment in the program)
- Development of Parent/Community MSCS Parent Music Champions Organization
- School Assemblies featuring different grade level performances.
- All School Mini Christmas Concert and Christmas Caroling Party.
- Spring Concert/Variety Show all grades.
- Spring Faculty/Student/Parent Talent Show (so much fun!) Possible fund raiser.
- Possibly start after school Mozart Strings Program in January.
• Summer recorder workshop for teachers (Mike & Elizabeth), teaching basic vocal skills workshop (Mike), sharing resources and where to find resources workshop (Mike & Elizabeth).
• Summer vocal workshop for students grades 3-5, and 6-8.
• Summer parent meeting for potential band/strings/orchestra discussion.

2016 – 2017

• Spring/Summer - possible parent/student/teacher meeting with Grainer Music/Meeker Music representatives to select beginning instruments for rent or purchase.
• Continue teacher support as a consultant, resource and encourager.
• Continue basic music class for each grade level.
• Continue Primary Choir, grades 3-5 (minimum 2x a week) need space.
• Continue Junior Choir, grades 6-8 (minimum 3x per week) need space.
• Start or continue Mozart String Program or bring on Student Teacher/Professional to work with strings in classroom grades 4-8 part time.
• Possibly start beginning band, grades 6-8 or grades 7-8 (minimum 2x, preferably 3x per week).
• Michaelmas Celebration (a lot more music around the theme).
• Grades 3-5 all participate in the Link Up program October-February.
• Fall Festival/Winter Concert/Christmas Concert (All school Strings/Band/?/Choirs).
• All School Christmas Caroling Party.
• Spring concert all grades, all groups.
• Spring Faculty/Student/Parent Talent Show (so much fun!) Possible fund raiser
• Summer recorder workshop (Mike & Elizabeth) /teaching basic vocal skills workshop (Mike) sharing resources and where to find resources workshop (Mike & Elizabeth).
• Summer vocal workshop for students grades 3-5, and 6-8.
• Summer parent meeting for potential band/strings/orchestra discussion.

2017 – 2018

• Spring/Summer - possible parent/student/teacher meeting with Grainer Music/Meeker Music representatives to select beginning instruments for rent or purchase.
• Continue teacher support as a consultant, resource and encourager.
• Continue basic music class for each grade level.
• Continue Primary Choir grades 3-5 (minimum 2x a week) need space.
• Continue Choir grades 6-8 (minimum 3x per week) need space.
• Add Show Choir (audition grades 5-8) probably before school.
• Mozart String Program continues or bring on Student Teacher/Professional to work with strings in classroom grades 4-8 part time.
• Beginning band, grades 5-6 (minimum 2x, preferably 3x per week).
• Add Intermediate Band, grades 7-8 (minimum 2x, preferably 3x per week).
• Michaelmas Celebration (a lot more music around the them).
• Add jazz band or jazz orchestra (audition grades 6-8) (minimum 2x, preferably 3x per week).
• Grades 3-5 all participate in the Link Up program October-February.
• Fall Festival/Winter Concert/Christmas Concert (All school Strings/Band/?/Choirs).
• All School Christmas Caroling Party.
• Spring concert all grades, all groups.
• Spring Faculty/Student/Parent Talent Show (so much fun!) Possible fund raiser.
• Summer recorder workshop (Mike & Elizabeth) / teaching basic vocal skills workshop (Mike) sharing resources and where to find resources workshop (Mike & Elizabeth).
• Summer vocal workshop for students grades 3-5, and 6-8.
• Summer parent meeting for potential band/strings/orchestra discussion.