
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District
ELEMENTARY MUSIC NEWSLETTER

November, 2009

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Coach

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**WELCOME TO OUR
NEW
MUSIC TEACHERS**

Please welcome new CFISD music teachers:

Melissa Butler – Sheridan

Brittany Gibson – Black

Kristen Huskey – Hemmenway

Jamie Johnson – Ault

Leslie Nance – McFee

Dixie Sellers – Gleason (returning to CF!)

Leigh Ann Watkins – Copeland (returning to CF!)

Pam Wilmer – Hancock (returning to CF!)



TMEA CONVENTION
Feb. 11–13, 2010
San Antonio

Our very own **Yeager Honor Choir** will be a featured TMEA honor choir. Their concert will be at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, February 12. I know it is a challenge for teachers to get permission to attend the convention, but, hopefully, some of you will be able to attend this year. There will be a Pre-TMEA Concert prior to the convention. When the details are in place, I will send the information to all elementary music teachers.



(The article on the Yeager Honor Choir can be found in the November issue of *Southwestern Musician*.)

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

New Teachers in Elementary Music & PE/Health

Thursday, Dec. 10, 2009 (4:30–6:30 p.m.)
Gleason Elementary; Course # **15734**

Mary and I will meet with new music and pe teachers to answer questions and provide assistance.

KUDOS KORNER

It was very exciting to visit music at Bane Elementary on Friday, November 13th.

Students were using keyboards or keyboard mats as the teacher, Sarah McKenna, used the SmartBoard to enhance instruction via technology. Several students were working at the computer center on a related keyboard activity.

MUSIC MEMORY 2010

Tuesday, May 25, 2010 (4:30 p.m.)
Berry Center

Sign-up forms were sent to schools in early November.

TECHNOLOGY TIME

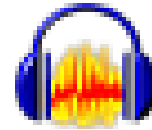
If you have not started using a computer rotation at the student computer center, it is never too late! If you are hesitant, invite me or Mary to come help.

It is very easy to teach the students to follow the classroom seating system to filter through

the rotation. Use a timer or tell the students to complete a specific activity before returning to their seats. Provide specific feedback and reinforce students who follow the procedures correctly. With the many *Midisaurus* and other computer activities available, it is fairly simple to find activities to correlate with the lesson being presented by the teacher. The computer center may also be used to prepare or review music concepts.

Do you have the audacity to use *Audacity*?

If you have not discovered the joys of *Audacity*, you must do so very soon. If the icon at the right is not displayed on your start screen or you cannot find *Audacity* in your “Programs” list, the program should be in your “NAL” (Novell-delivered Applications) window. This is the same place teachers go to launch the “Global” drive. Simply maximize the Novell window (at the bottom of your start screen) and double-click on *Audacity* to load the program.



Audacity is a free audio editor and recording program. I use it frequently to change pitch for songs I sing. Also, I create mixes of songs to use with *PowerPoints*. It is excellent for cutting, lengthening, and so much more.

Look for an *Audacity* session during the spring semester.



VOCAL HEALTH

For elementary music teachers, in order to promote vocal health...

➤ Keep the class student-centered

- Avoid overuse of the voice.
- Use signs and signals when appropriate.
- Sing as little as possible with the students.

➤ Make use of recordings

- The recordings for the adopted textbooks are excellent.



➤ Use amplification, if needed

- Many teachers use amplification systems; however, I often see teachers continue to use a teaching voice while wearing a microphone. Not only is this harsh to the listener, it also negates the value for the voice.
- Bring your teacher vocal volume down a bit while wearing a microphone.

➤ Warm up

- Before singing/speaking for a day of teaching, perform some vocal warm-ups.

➤ Hydrate

(Adapted from *Teaching Music*, Vol. 16, No. 3, MENC, November, 2008)



CURRICULUM

CONNECTIONS

CFISD music teachers are making curriculum connections on a regular basis. I recently watched a performance of a music program that focused on connections between music and core content.

It is my belief that content connections occur on a regular basis in music; however, I want to get the word out to others.

To do so effectively, I need to ask that you send me specifics on content connections that you make in music. You can send specific activities, warm-up ideas, brief descriptions, or invite me to come observe!

Kindly follow-through by responding to this request.

I truly believe that music education is valuable in and of itself. Moreover, you, as teachers, are innovative and creative in making content connections.

Please, allow me to spread the good word!



ORCHESTRA STUDY GUIDES

It has been many years since I have taken a group of children to a symphony performance, but I still enjoy living vicariously by google-ing different orchestras to look at their study guides.

There are many excellent guides to be found, and I do believe that many of them contain information and activities that teachers may find useful in the music classroom. In fact, that is the purpose of the guides. The missing piece is the actual culminating event of the trip to the symphony.

One of my favorite sites for superb study guides is the San Antonio Symphony's: http://www.sasymphony.org/e_young.php

Several guides are archived. (Please note that I have not proofed every guide. *As always, it is important for individual teachers to research and review all material before making decisions related to appropriateness for classroom use.*)