

Music Classroom Newsletter – February

Kindergarten – 2nd Graders are focused on keeping a steady beat. They especially like the chant *Boogie Down* where they not only practice keeping a consistent tempo, but also get to show off their dance moves. They enjoy performing *Oh My, No More Pie!* where one student sings alone as the leader and the rest of the group responds. This gives the students a chance to hear themselves sing without other voices. Each class is confidently singing the solfege scale (do, re, mi, etc.) with the coordinating Kodaly hand movements.

3rd- 6th Graders are focused on keeping a steady beat by breathing, tapping their foot, and clapping to the tempo established on the metronome. In the chant *Doot, Doot, Doot* (set to the tune of *Good King Wenceslas*) they practice clapping on the strong beat of the measure. As they progress, they will find the strong beat in different time signatures. For 3rd-4th graders, music theory is focused on using mnemonics (All Cows Eat Grass) for remembering note names in the treble and bass clefs. They are being introduced to the C major scale through boom-whackers (tuned percussion tubes) and then connecting it to the solfege scale. For 5th - 6th graders, music theory is focused on note values in different time signatures, clapping out the rhythms and then performing them on the boom-whackers.

7th – 8th Graders are focused on keeping a steady beat by breathing, tapping their foot, and clapping to the tempo established on the metronome. They are learning to find the strong beat when transitioning between 3 beats per measure and 4 beats per measure. They are doing some rhythmic work on the boom-whackers but they are mostly focused on performing more complicated patterns on the bucket drums. Give a 7th or 8th grader a pair of drumsticks and they immediately become a rock star!

Honors Choir continues to rehearse with me remotely every Thursday after school. These rehearsals are solely spent on vocal exercises, expanding breathe support and vocal range, and sight-reading new music. Each week we work on one sacred piece of music from the church hymnals and one secular

piece of music. They are currently singing *Variations on a theme by Gabriel Faure* (from "Pavane. Op. 50"). Being that this music was originally composed for instruments, the only words are "loo", "pum", "tu", and "ba". I look forward to the day when I can hear their angelic voices filling the halls of the school and the sanctuary of the church. Honors Choir is open to students in 3rd – 8th grade.