



Update from the Superintendent

To: All BDS Employees
From: Bill Husfelt, Superintendent
Date: March 3, 2023

This is a copy of the Superintendent's weekly message that is sent to parents/guardians. We want to make sure you have the same information as well, so you're in the loop :)

March is National Music in our Schools Month, and I look forward to our month-long celebration of "all things music."

Music is essential to so many of our students and their families. According to online sources (<https://www.dosomething.org/us/facts/11-facts-about-music-education>), children who study music:

- Tend to have larger vocabularies and more advanced reading skills than their peers who do not participate in music lessons.
- Are more likely to excel in their studies, work better in teams, have enhanced critical thinking skills, stay in school, and pursue further education.
- Have better attendance and graduation rates than their peers who do not study music or play an instrument.
- Build lifelong friendships.

Recently, we had the pleasure of recognizing Bill and Mary Kay Thompson, two lifelong music educators, as our PanCare Teachers of a Lifetime. Together, the Thompsons have taught thousands of children to love and play music, and the students they taught are now keeping the tradition alive as music teachers themselves. We value ALL teachers but this month we're highlighting those who literally make the music happen in our schools for thousands of students. It was an honor to recognize the Thompsons, hear from those they impacted, and realize how many lives they changed simply by bringing music to their students.

On a personal note, the Thompsons taught all three of my daughters who were involved in band in middle school and high school. While all three girls were involved in a plethora of activities, and made many friends, some of their closest friends today are those they met in the band. The band programs definitely contributed to their overall confidence and problem-solving skills and gave us many "proud band mom and dad" moments.

While it's easy for parents to see, and hear, the hard work of our music educators when students perform in plays, concerts, parades and other productions, I think it's important for us to recognize the countless hours behind the scenes that we don't see. Our music educators pour their hearts and souls into their programs and put in hundreds of hours they don't get paid for to ensure students succeed. Music educators select music, choreograph performances, schedule performances, manage field trips and out-of-town concerts, coordinate transportation and fundraisers and a myriad of other tasks for which they don't get accolades or public praise. I want to publicly thank those employees today ... they contribute greatly to the happiness of our students and the success of our schools.

I wish that all schools could offer music education to all students but, unfortunately, that's not always possible. Sometimes schools can't find music teachers to hire. In other cases, principals must make the hard decision to forgo a music teacher in lieu of a teacher who can focus on a combined science, technology, engineering, art and math approach to help struggling students. We are incredibly proud, however, of the arts programs we do have and the very creative ways that ALL teachers find to infuse music into their classrooms and daily routines.

If you know a successful music student, there's also a hard-working music teacher in your circle. So please take a few minutes this month to let those music educators know how much we appreciate and value them and how important music is in our schools.

Stay safe, and God Bless!