

# Koality Music Notes

Mr. VandeWalle and Mr. Briones. Music Education Specialists

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## Welcome Back to School

Welcome back to another exciting year at Kocurek Elementary School. We have a lot of very fun and educational plans for this year's music classes.

Students at Kocurek will attend music classes with one of our two music teachers, Mr. VandeWalle or Mr. Briones.

Mr. VandeWalle is the primary music teacher on campus. Teaching in AISD is near and dear to his heart as he is a graduate of the Austin Independent School District

(Crockett High School 1995). This will be his 11th year teaching music in the district and his 3rd year at Kocurek.

Mr. Briones is in his 2nd year at Kocurek and will be spending his teaching time between two campuses, spending half his time at Kocurek and the other half at Highland Park. He has been a valuable part of our Essential Areas Team and we are excited that he is back for another year.

The year is just beginning and it is already looking

to be the best ever. From music, art and P.E. to each individual classroom, the excitement of the school year has spread through the halls. We are looking forward to working with each student and every parent.

If at any time you have any questions you can feel free to contact Mr. VandeWalle or Mr. Briones.



## Dress for Success in Music

As many of you already know, AISD has adopted a school wide dress code for both, students and teachers.

While it is not required by the school district, we would like to ask students to wear tennis shoes on days that they will be in music class.

Part of the learning

experience in music is participating in dance lessons, games and movement lessons that may prove difficult to do if a student is wearing sandals or flip-flops. We want every student to enjoy these fun activities without getting hurt.

Although there is no specific requirement for clothing

in music class, please be mindful that students will be sitting on the floor and may feel more comfortable in certain outfits.

### Things to Remember

- Each student should wear tennis shoes to music class
- Dress appropriately for music class
- If your 3rd, 4th or 5th grade student has a recorder already, please bring it to class
- September 24th 6:30pm 4th Grade PTA Program

## Mi Cuerpo, Mi Cuerpo Hace Musica

We are excited to be starting another great year of kindergarten music.

This year our kindergarten students will be participating in activities that will help them to develop their own instrument...their singing voice! Through games and dances we will travel the world and learn to enjoy music from all cultures. At the beginning of the year we learn about how our body can make mu-

sic through a popular folk songs such as "Mi Cuerpo."

Our kindergarten students will experience directed and undirected interactions with sound by listening, singing, playing instruments and using body movements. These activities will be performed in large groups, smaller groups and independently by each student.

Through music and performance we also begin teaching students to be confident with themselves and to be considerate of others.

As our kindergarten students grow throughout the year we will be sure to keep you informed of their musical progress.

## Recorder Karate is Back

Each school year we teach our third, fourth and fifth grade students how to play a simple music instrument, the recorder. It is a flute-like instrument that helps the students begin to learn how to read music. It is important for each student to have his or her own recorder. This instrument will be used in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade and if cared for properly, will last forever. The recorders can be ordered through Mr. VandeWalle or they can be purchased from music supply stores such as Strait Music. We will be sending home letters as soon as we are ready to place an order for this school year. The cost will be \$6.00 if choose to order through one of your music teachers. If buying from a music supply store, prices can range from \$5-\$15. Please avoid purchasing recorders from stores such as Dollar General and Wal-Mart. While these recorders may look like real instruments they are actually toys and not instruments. These recorders could lower your students chances to be successful in class

Part of the recorder experience at Kocurek is RECORDER KARATE! This is a method of assessment that is very similar to that used in a Karate Dojo. Each student can receive a belt to go around the recorder for passing a playing test on various songs that increase in difficulty. For more info about our Recorder Karate program you can visit our website.

## Learning to Perform

It is that time of year again! The time to begin preparing for the monthly PTA programs. Each month we will showcase one of our many fantastic grade levels. On September 24th, we will be starting with our fourth grade students and their salute to Texas.

Part of learning about music is experience performing in live situations. Our PTA Program schedule includes a performance from each grade level that attends music classes (kinder through 5th grade). The schedule will also include a winter and spring Program by our Koala Choir.

More information on programs, including times and dates can be found on our website.

The PTA Program Schedule is as follows:

September— 4th Grade  
 October—5th Grade  
 November —3rd Grade  
 December —Choir  
 February —School Talent Show  
 March —1st Grade  
 April —2nd Grade  
 May —Kindergarten  
 May—Choir

## Great Musical Lineup For This School Year

Part of what makes going to music classes in Austin Independent School District so wonderful are the wide variety of musical assemblies and performances that are offered for the students.

Each school year we are offered great, enriching performances for our students.

This year our Pre-Kindergarteners, Kindergarteners, first graders and second graders will be attending an assembly presented by the Austin Symphony Orchestra about the instruments of the Orchestra called "Building Blocks." This years assembly will be "The Woodwind Family." The members of the Austin Symphony Orchestra String section will come to the school to show us a variety of string instruments including the flute,

clarinet, oboe and bassoon. This assembly is free to all students.

For the third, fourth and fifth graders we will have a lesson and performance provided by the Austin Jazz Workshop. This is a local Jazz group that will introduce our older students to the world of Jazz through one 45 minute lesson followed by a live jazz concert. This is one of the favorite assemblies of the school year. This assembly is also free to all students.

Another exciting experience that we are offered is a live performance of Tchaikovsky's famous ballet, The Nutcracker. This performance is held right before Winter Break. Although this performance is not free, it is offered to us at an amazingly low cost. This field trip is for

third graders only. More information about this field trip will be sent home in as soon as it is available.

The 4th and 5th grade student will attend a field trip in May to see a performance by the Austin Symphony Orchestra. This trip is provided to us free by the ASO and it's sponsors.

These are just some of the performance that await us. As you can see, this year's musical lineup is packed full of exciting experiences. We will send home more information as these performances come upon us.

### Contact Us:

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MUSIC CLASS WEBSITE  
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### KOCUREK SCHOOL SONG!

Three big cheers for Kocurek  
 It's the school that we love  
 Bowties & effort & quality  
 We're the koalas &  
 we'll make you see  
 That we have a school that's a winner  
 Our fame will spread far & wide  
 For it's  
 K-O-C-U-R-E-K  
 That's Koala Pride!