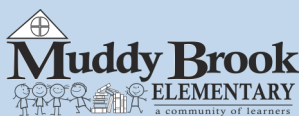


Muddy Brook Elementary

Specialist Learning Link



Inside this issue:

Music—Mr. Gillespie & Mrs. Moran	2
Music—Mrs. Bickford	3
Technology—Mrs. Candee	4
Library—Ms. Smith	5
Art—Ms. Benton	6
PE—Mrs. Pleu	7

Specialist Areas & Grade Levels

Art

Mrs. Benton
PK—4th Grade

Library

Ms. Smith
PK—4th Grade

Music

Mrs. Moran
Kindergarten

Music

Mrs. Bickford
KDG—1st Grade

Music

Mr. Gillespie |
2nd Grade—4th Grade

Technology

Mrs. Candee
2nd Grade—4th Grade

Physical Education

Mrs. Pleu
KDG—4th Grade

January News

January 9, 2015

Happy New Year Muddy Brook Families,

2015 has brought with it some very raw temperatures! Although the outdoor temperature has been cold, inside Muddy Brook, warmth exudes and calmness radiates. Children have returned from a very long vacation happy to be here and proud to continue growing and learning. The routines are well established, many faces are familiar and new faces are fitting in beautifully.

During vacation I had a chance to revisit some of the topics that I studied last year when I was in the Master's program, Mind, Brain and Education, at Harvard University. I read two books about learning and the brain; Differentiation and the Brain by David Sousa & Carol Ann Tomlinson and The Teaching Brain a brand new book by a college friend, Vanessa Rodriguez. Both of these books discuss brain development and the importance of engagement and connection in the process of learning and memory.

At Muddy Brook the student reports that have come home thus far have given you a sense of where your child performs compared to our standards and peer norms. As we move forward and look toward our March 27 student-led portfolio afternoon, where we will focus on individual student progress, we will begin to guide students in setting their own goals and/or in participating and reflecting on their individual growth. Please support this process by noticing when your child works hard. Celebrate and engage in the effort! Vanessa Rodriguez would say that, "Teaching is an interaction that occurs between humans who express a desire to connect with each other and join their knowledge." She states that teaching is the interchange that happens between individuals. Our work is to know each learner, listen to each other, build on strengths and support weaknesses.

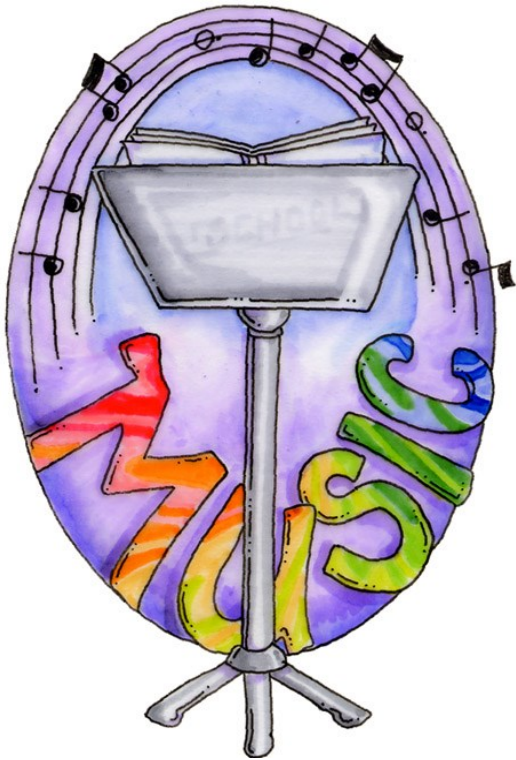
We are all learners and we are all teachers. 2015 can bring new experiences for each and every one of us. May we open our hearts to learning and may we teach others with sensitivity and awareness.

Happy 2015,

Nan Thompson



Music Notes from Mr. Gillespie



This month in 3rd and 4th grade music the students will be developing their creativity by mixing and producing music. Each third grade student will be using the app "Figure" on the iPad to mix and record a short tune, which includes drums, bass and lead parts. 4th grade students will be exploring the app "Garage Band" and the variety of instruments and sounds they can mix and record. Parents will have the opportunity to listen to what all of the students have created at www.soundcloud.com starting in a few weeks. It will be a fun and creative unit!

In January The 2nd Grade will be having fun with the "boomwhackers", learning to read music and perform with these fun instruments! The students will also begin learning to play the recorder by the end of the month

Select Chorus will begin shortly! This chorus of 3rd and 4th graders will rehearse every Friday at 8am (starting on January 23rd). This group will work on advanced singing techniques and perform select pieces at our Spring Concert. Any student interested in signing up for the Select Chorus should sign up outside the music room starting next week.

The Muddy Brook Band will begin weekly rehearsals on Wednesdays at 8:00 (starting on January 21st). These rehearsals are *in addition* to the students' regular lesson. Keep up the home practice as we start to learn new and exciting band music!

Orchestra Outlook by Juraye Moran

Welcome back to Muddy Brook Elementary School. The halls are once again full of music before school every day. Our Winter concert was a huge success and we are on to bigger and better things. Advanced students will be learning new bowing styles this month. Better control of the bow will allow them to use slurs and ties. Ask them to show you the difference. Beginning strings will be learning more advanced rhythms using quarter, half, and eighth notes as well as the corresponding rests. Not only will students be able to play with more complicated rhythms, but they will be seeing the correlations between Music and Math hands on. The Perfect Practice Competition also begins this month. Students will track their home and school practice on charts for eight weeks. Parents need to sign each week as I will be notating our good practice routines.

Kindergarten Music with Mrs. Moran will incorporate the holidays of the month. We will be learning about New Year's Customs as well as Martin Luther King Day. We will be learning appropriate songs about these two January events. Students will also further the concept of Loud versus Soft singing through classroom games and songs. Lots of fun learning going on this month.



Music Magic by Julie Bickford



Happy New Year!

During the month of January, students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade will be learning about the instruments of the orchestra. Each class will discover the different instrument families: strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The students will read about the instruments, listen to musical examples of each instrument, and explore the instruments' size and shape with a coloring activity.

First grade students will continue to work on their rhythm reading and writing this month. You may see some rhythm compositions coming home, so stay tuned! Kindergarten students will continue to echo, create, and decode rhythm patterns using their voices, their hands, rhythm sticks, and various percussion instruments.

All classes will continue to sing and dance joyfully, so remember to ask your children to sing at home!

Songs to Sing at Home

The More We Get Together (K/1)

Hello Everybody (1)

Goodbye Everybody (K/1)

My Hat it has Three Corners (K)

Going Over the Sea (K)

The Crocodile Song (1)

My Little Puppy (1)

Musically yours,
Ms. Bickford

Don' t
Forget to
Sing at
Home!

~TECHNOLOGY~

Happy New Year! I hope families are starting 2015 off feeling rested with new goals in mind for a wonderful new year.

~December Recap and a Helpful Reminder~



Our students use computers every day, developing proper keyboarding skills is an important fundamental skill our students need to have. Our 3rd and 4th grade students are focusing on learning proper keyboarding skills. We are focusing on memorizing the home keys, asdf jkl; and becoming comfortable resting our hands on those keys when typing. This is a skill that will only develop with practice. I encourage students to practice at home when possible. If you have access to the internet check out **Dance Mat Typing** at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr> this is a fun typing game from the BBC. The game has 4 levels, each of which are divided into 3 stages. Fifteen minutes of practice on a regular basis will greatly improve your child's typing proficiency.

Students have been busy applying their keyboarding skills as they created different projects before the Holiday Break. Third and fourth grade created Family Customs booklets. Students learned how to create a PowerPoint document, edit their writing, and create their own illustrations using the program Paint. The final outcomes were beautiful! Stop by the Computer Lab to check out some of the projects on display.

Second grade also focused on word processing, editing, and original digital illustrations. Students had the option of typing a gingerbread poem or writing their own original gingerbread poem, and then through the use of Paint created their gingerbread illustrations.

~What's New?~

~2nd Grade~



Second Grade is starting an exciting new unit using the iPads through the use of Scratch Jr, a program created by MIT. Scratch Jr is an introductory programming language that allows younger children to create their own interactive stories and games.

As students code, they learn how to create and express themselves with technology, not just interact with it. In the process, children learn to solve problems and design projects, and they develop sequencing skills that are foundational for later academic success. They also use math and language in a meaningful and motivating context, supporting the development of early-childhood numeracy and literacy.

~3rd and 4th Grade~



Third and fourth grade will be focusing on improving their keyboarding skills in conjunction with Lexia and a new resource called Khan Academy. Khan Academy is a free online resource that allows students to practice their math skills by using interactive exercises, videos, and tutorials. As students learn, their activity feeds into reports that show important information such as strengths and weaknesses in a particular concept. This resource will help to provide a math focused personalized learning experience; much like Lexia does for literacy. If you would like more information and/or reviews about Khan Academy check out <https://www.commonsemmedia.org/website-reviews/khan-academy>.

Permission slips went home this week regarding the use of this resource (Hot Pink Paper!). If you have not signed and returned the permission slip please do so by MONDAY! If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at erin.candee@bhrsd.org.

Library Update

Happy New Year!

I hope these past two weeks provided you with enjoyable family time and a chance to discover some new books and revisit some old favorites!

The month of January is a time to think about what we've learned so far this school year and to begin exploring new topics.

PreK, EK, and K are beginning the month with a very brief review of library procedures and book care.

1st and 2nd grade are finishing up their fairytales and fable units during the first and second week of January.

3rd and 4th grade are beginning the month with an introduction to the self-check-out system so they will have the chance to check-out books even if I am not present (or am busy with another class). This will provide the older students with some more independence and responsibility. They are all very excited for this new library feature.

During the next month I will also be working more closely with classroom teachers to better connect library lessons with what is happening in the classrooms. This connection will provide your child(ren) with a deeper understanding of topics being discussed in the classroom and will give them the chance to explore specific areas that interest them.

Also, within the next month or so we will be unveiling a new area in the library: **The Muddy Brook Authors Corner!** This special area will feature stories written by Muddy Brook students and staff and will be available for everyone to peruse. Stories written in The Story Kitchen, in the classroom, and at home will be included in this wonderful new space! I am excited to see what stories emerge from our amazing community!

If you ever need/want to contact me, I would love to hear from you: elisabeth.smith@bhrsd.org

Happy Reading!
Elisabeth Smith
School Library Media Specialist



Greetings from the Art Studio by Ali Benton

Greetings from the art studio!

I hope the New Year finds your family happy, healthy, and full of art! Students came back to school energized and ready to work. We started with self-portraits which help assess artists' comfort level with detail, proportion and the human form. Students also conferred their plans and goals for upcoming art work. Choice-based art education allows students to follow their passions while building on existing skills.

Artists at every grade level will be observing and drawing in art class in the upcoming weeks. Students will be developing their own plans for projects that show and grow their abilities to envision, express, stretch and explore ([Artist Habits of the Mind](#)). Winter will be an art-centered wonderland at Muddy Brook as students connect their learning, ideas and questions across the curriculum. I am excited to see where students take their ideas in the weeks ahead! As always, please ask your child about their art experiences and encourage art play and open ended discussions about color, shape and artist intent when observing the world around you.

Artfully yours,

Ms. Benton

Alexandra.benton@bhrrsd.org



Building with blocks is always a popular art center for artists of all ages.



Physical Education News



Winter Wonderland....Get out and play!

Greetings Muddy Brook Community! We have some exciting activities planned in P.E. this month so make sure you come to school with the proper winter gear for outside activities!

In PK – 2nd grade we are practicing our manipulative skills such as throwing, kicking and hand & foot dribbling and incorporating station work to practice these skills.

In 3rd & 4th grades we are starting 2015 off with revisiting cooperative games in order to emphasize important characteristics such as fair play, honesty & teamwork. We will then move into invasion games and volleyball skills.



Throughout the above units we will incorporate getting outside in the snow – weather permitting. Our goal is to get outside with all grades to go sledding and/or play a variety of games out in the snow!

****Please be on the lookout for notices coming home about our annual
WINTERFEST at Butternut Ski Basin.*

In February, all of Muddy Brook School will have the opportunity to go tubing at Butternut. Butternut has graciously hosted us (free of charge!!!) for the past 5 years and we greatly appreciate our community collaboration we have gained with this wonderful establishment!



The Physical Education Dept. welcomes Julia Warner! She is doing her student teaching with us and will be here through the month of May. She is finishing her senior year at Westfield State University and we are happy to have her joining us!



Chess Club News

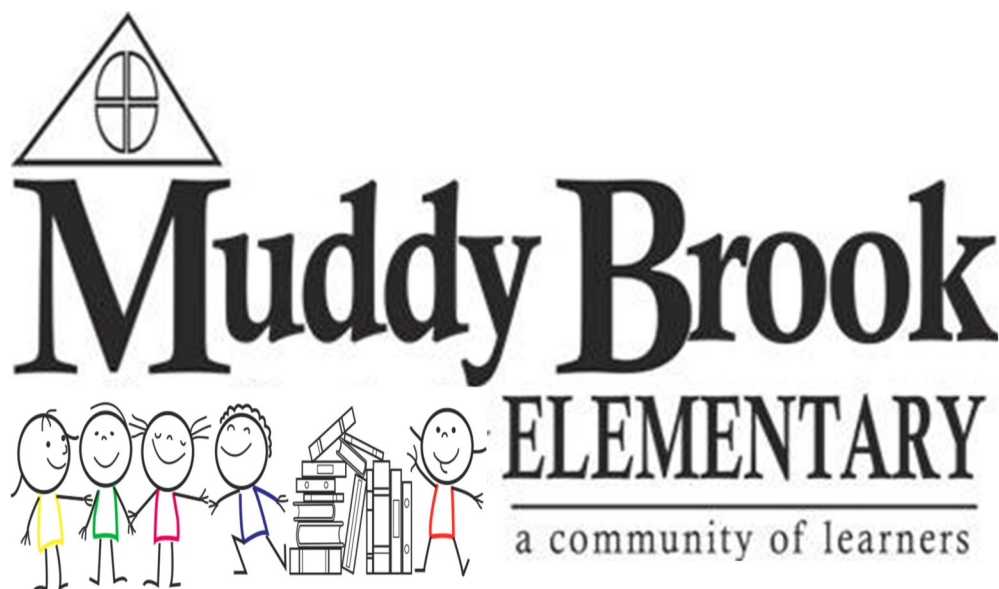


CHESS CLUB is thriving. The games are getting better and better as students from kindergarten to fourth grade play each other, winning and losing and finding new ways to become better chess players. Everyone is having lots of fun. If you haven't discovered **THE CHESS CLUB** yet, come join us every Monday and Wednesday morning from 8:00 to 8:30 in the Muddy Brook library. Learn how to play or come and practice your game. Adults are welcome as well. In the spring, we will be having the annual Muddy Brook chess tournament and those who have been practicing their chess skills will have an advantage over those who enter the tournament at the last second.

Benjamin Franklin had many words to say about how to play chess. Here are some of them that I would like to share with you:

"When playing chess, moderate your desire for victory over your adversary and be pleased with one over yourself. Snatch not eagerly at every advantage caused by his unskillfulness or inattention, but point out to him kindly, that by such a move he leaves a piece in danger and unsupported, that by another he will put his king in a perilous situation, etc. By this generous civility you may indeed, happen to lose the game to your opponent, but you will win what is better, his esteem, his respect, and his affection, together with the silent approbation and goodwill of impartial spectators."

Gene Kalish





BERKSHIRE HILLS YOUTH SOCCER CLUB



SPRING 2015 REGISTRATION

Returning 2014 fall players interested in playing spring 2015 soccer need only to submit a \$135 check made out to BHYSC and mail to PO BOX 632 Great Barrington, MA 01230 to register. **Reduced fees for multiple players in one family apply. Please see the website for details.**

To register for a Spring 2015 Travel Team **if you were not on a fall 2014 roster** each family/player should:

1. Family Registration Form -Each family should submit one Family registration form to enroll all players.
2. ZERO TOLERANCE SIGNATURE FORM - one form for each family
3. A copy of player Birth Certificate
4. A 1x1 inch photo
5. A \$135 Check made out to BHYSC

Mail all 5 items listed above to BHYSC at PO Box 632 Great Barrington, MA 01230. Please be sure ALL items are included before mailing.

Registration for spring will close on Saturday January 10, 2015. The spring rosters each have a cut off number due to the Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC) rules. There may be a need for tryouts (U12 & U14 only) if there are more players registered than can be rostered for each grade level. Players and families will be notified via email of tryout information if this happens.

All questions regarding the Spring Season can be emailed to BerkshireHillsSoccer@gmail.com.

****PLEASE NOTE** - Kristen Flynn is no longer the Berkshire Hills Youth Soccer Club Town Coordinator. Please send any questions regarding the spring season to the email address above to be directed to the best person to help.

UNIQUE SPORTS OFFERINGS

Junior Squash Program

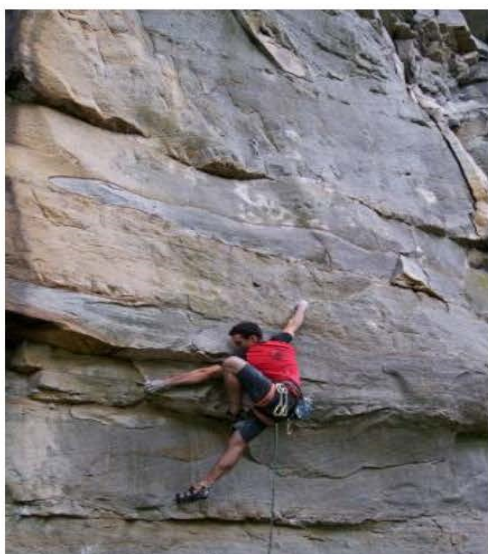
We have the only public squash courts in South County!

Age: 10 to 16 years

Thursdays, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Session I: Begins 2/5, Ends 3/12, No class 2/19

Session II: Begins 4/2, Ends 5/7, No class 4/23



Adult Squash Clinic

Ages 16 years & up

Mondays, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Session I: Begins 1/5, Ends 2/2

Session II: Begins 2/23, Ends 3/23

Play on the only INDOOR rock climbing wall in Berkshire County!

Kid's Climb Class

Ages 10 to 13 years

Thursdays, 5:45-6:45 p.m.

Session 1: Begins 1/8, Ends 2/12

Session 2: Begins 2/26, Ends 4/2

Kid's Intro to Climbing

Ages 6 to 9 years

Thursdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Session 1: Begins 1/8, Ends 2/12

Session 2: Begins 2/26, Ends 4/2



Bard College at Simon's Rock
84 Alford Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230
(413) 528-7777 simons-rock.edu/kac



Swim Lessons

Choose SwimAmerica for these reasons:

- *Experience - Over 4000 Berkshire region children enrolled since 1996*
- *Quality – Small classes, flexible schedule, individualized training*
- *Staff- Most experienced, diverse and dedicated in the region*

For Safety, Fun, Opportunity & Fitness

Preschool Lessons (ages 3 and 4 years)

*Offered Tuesday afternoons & Saturday mornings –
beginning January 27th!*

School-age Lessons (ages 5 and up)

*Offered Wednesday afternoons & Saturday mornings –
beginning February 11th!*

***Prepare your child for Spring Break
& summer fun!***

For more information, call 528-7777.



THE KILPATRICK
Athletic Center
Bard College at Simon's Rock

These programs are not sponsored, nor endorsed by Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

Address: _____ DOB: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____
 Parent's Name: _____ #: _____
 Emergency Contact: _____ #: _____
 Please list any allergies, medical conditions and medications:

 Course Selection: _____ Tuition: _____
 Course Selection: _____ Tuition: _____
 Course Selection: _____ Tuition: _____
 _____ Total: _____
 Tuition pricing available online: renaissanceartscenter.org

Method of Payment:

☐ Check or Money Order ☐ Credit card ☐ Cash
 Credit Card #: _____
 Expiration: ____/____ 3 Digit Security Code: _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Winter 2015 Schedule

Writing

1 Th: 5:30-7pm
 2 Th: 7-8:30pm
 3 Th: 4-5:30pm
 Sat: 9-10:30am

Photography

4 Th: Children 4-5:30pm
 Sat: Children 10:30-12pm
 5 Th: Teen/Adult 5:30-7pm
 Sat: Teen/Adult 9-10:30am

Dance & Movement

6 Sun: 10:15-11am
 7 M: 4-5pm
 8 M: 4-5pm
 9 Sat: 2-3:30pm
 10 F: 6-7pm
 11 M: 5-6pm
 12 F: 4-5pm
 13 Sat: 2-3:30pm
 14 F: 6-7pm
 15 M: 5-6pm

Tumbling

16 T: 10-10:45am

17 T: 11-11:45am
 Sat: 10:15-11am
 Sat: 11:15-12pm
 18 T: 4:45-5:45pm
 Sat: 12-1pm
 19 Sat: 1-2pm

Theatre

20 F: 4:45-5:45pm
 21 W: 4-5pm

Art

22 T: 4-5:30pm
 23 W: 4-5pm
 24 M: 4-5pm
 F: 4-5pm
 25 T: 4-5pm
 26 F: 4-5pm
 27 Please Call
 28 M: 4:45-5:45pm
 29 T: 4-5pm
 30 Please Call
 31 W: 5-6pm
 32 M: 4-5pm
 33 W: 4-6pm
 34 Th: 5-6:30pm
 35 Sat: 11:30-12:30pm

36 T: 6-7pm
 37 T: 5-6pm
 38 Sat: 2-3pm
 39 F: 6-7pm
 40 T: 5:45-7:15pm
 41 Sat: 10:30-12pm
 Sat: 2:30-4pm
 42 Sat: 12:30-2pm
 43 T: 1:30-3pm
 44 T: 6-7pm
 45 T: 5-6pm

Music

46 Sat: 9:30-11am
 47 Sat: 2-3:30pm
 48 Sun: 11-11:30am
 49 Sat: 9:30-11am
 50 Sat: 2-3:30pm
 51 F: 5-6pm
 52 F: 6-7:30pm
 53 W: 4-5:30pm
 Sat: 12:30-2pm
 54 Sat: 11-12:30pm
 55 Sat: 12:30-2pm
 56 Sat: 12:30-2pm



RENAISSANCE ARTS CENTER

Writing

- 1- Intro to Creative Writing
- 2- Teen/Adult Creative Writing
- 3- College Essay Intensive

Dance & Movement

Ages: 2-4yrs. (parent participation)
 6- Creative Ballet

Ages: 3-5yrs.

7- Beginner Ballet

Ages: 5-8yrs.

8- Beginner Ballet

9- Intermediate Ballet

10- Beginner Jazz

11- Beginner Hip Hop

Ages: 9yrs. - Teen

12- Beginner Ballet

13- Intermediate Ballet

14- Beginner Jazz

15- Beginner Hip Hop

Photography

- 4- Beginner Digital Photography
- 5- Digital Photography

Tumbling

Ages: 18m - 3yrs. (parent participation)
 16- Mini Movers

Ages: 3-5yrs.

17- Tiny Tumblers

Ages: 6-12yrs.

18- Rising Stars

Ages: 6-12yrs.

19- Acrobatic Circus Stars

Theatre

Ages: 6yrs & Up

20- The Art of Puppetry

21- Fun with Theatre & Acting

Fitness Classes

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| > Baby & Me Yoga | > Zumba® | > Yoga for Meditation |
| > Ballet Workout | > Hello Abs | > Body Boot Camp |
| > T-N-T (Tone N' Tighten) | > Physio Tone | > Personal Training |
| > Gentle Yoga | > TRX® | > Workshops |



Winter Programs

January – March 2015

Full Class Descriptions available at:
Renaissanceartscenter.org

Renaissance Arts Center
 420 Stockbridge Road, Suite 11
 Great Barrington, MA 01230
 Phone: (413)-528-9600

**Voted
 Best Art School
 2014
 The Berkshire Record**



Program Selection

Full Class Descriptions available at: Renaissanceartscenter.org

Art

Ages: 5-7yrs.

- 22- Clay Construction Exploration
- 23- The Art of Collage
- 24- Adventures in the Arts
- 25- Mosaic for Children
- 26- Drawing Techniques
- 27- Homeschool Exploration

Ages: 10yrs. - Teen

- 33- Design, Fashion & Beyond
- 34- Studies in Still Life
- 35- College Portfolio Development
- 36- Custom Sneakers 101
- 37- Fundamentals of Airbrushing

Music

Ages: 5-8yrs.

- 46- Beginner Guitar
- 47- Music Theory
- 48- Music & Movement Together

Ages: Teen – Adult

- 54- Beg./Int. Guitar
- 55- Adult Vocals
- 56- Electronic Music Production

Ages: 8-10yrs.

- 28- Studies in Drawing & Painting
- 29- Mosaic for Children
- 30- Homeschool Exploration
- 31- The Art of Collage
- 32- Fundamentals of Airbrushing

Ages: Teen - Adult

- 38- The Art of Watercolor
- 39- Abstract to Representational
- 40- 3D Exploration
- 41- Drawing Intensive I
- 42- Drawing Intensive II
- 43- Drawing, Painting & More
- 44- Custom Sneakers 101
- 45- Fundamentals of Airbrushing

Ages: 9yrs. - Teen

- 49- Beginner Guitar
- 50- Music Theory
- 51- "Fun"amentals of Music
- 52- Young Adult Vocals
- 53- Electronic Music Production