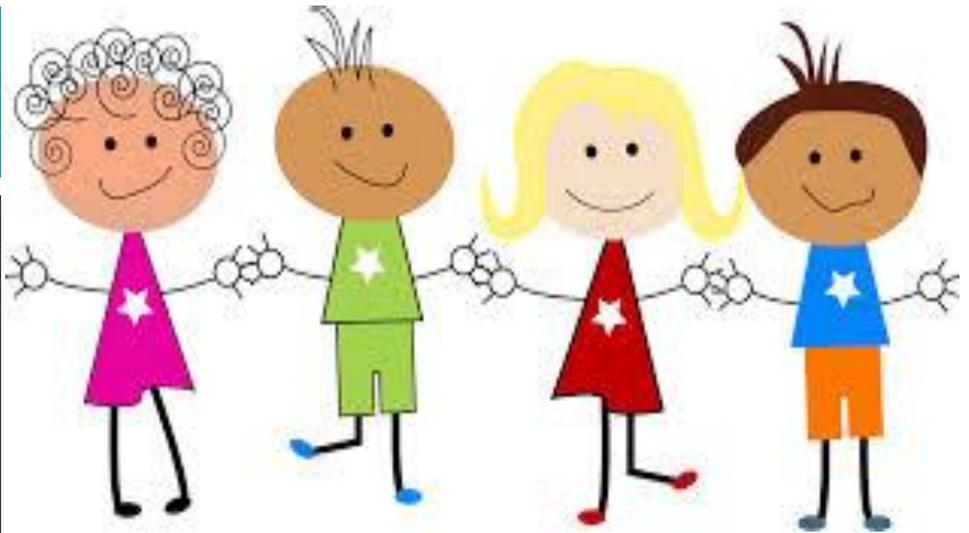


# The Integrated Update

November 2016



Volume 18, Issue 1

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## Notes from the Principal's Office

*By Thomas Ford*

I appreciate you taking the time to read this year's first edition of *The Integrated Update*. Having recently celebrated Thanksgiving, I am always thankful for our wonderful school community. Our talented students and staff could not do what they do without you.

Thank you for your continued support and happy reading!

### Readers' Workshop

Enhancing Readers' Workshop continues to be an important instructional focus in 2016-2017. This year, we are implementing the Teachers College Reading Units of Study in every grade level. The units were developed under the direction of renowned educator Lucy Calkins (who, incidentally, has Region 13 connections). Our teachers have worked hard to deliver the new units with a goal of helping our children to develop a true love of reading. At all grade levels, students are learning the routines and expectations of Readers' Workshop and quickly developing independent reading stamina.

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**Good Vibrations!**  
**John Lyman Third and Fourth**  
**Graders Working with Don Cooper**

*By Philip Moriarty*  
*Third/Fourth Grade Teacher*

Are you feeling those Good Vibrations!? Well, our students certainly are! The third and fourth grade students have been working with resident artist Don Cooper. Mr. Cooper is an accomplished songwriter and guitarist as well as a former music teacher at Samuel Staples Elementary School. Now, he's working with the third and fourth grade students at John Lyman putting the Arts in S.T.E.A.M.!

*What is Good Vibrations?*

Good Vibrations is the name of our teaching artist residency where music, math and science are woven together. Students have been working hard exploring concepts such as rhythm, time signatures and tempo as they relate to fractional parts of whole measures. We have also been exploring vibration, how sound is made, frequency, pitch and how a variety of solids (materials) affect a sound produced. From here students will apply what they have learned to create their own instruments!

*What's Going on in the Classroom?*

It started with some exciting rhythmic movements, clapping to rhythms, and much more! Students practiced counting in 4 counts and 3 counts, and learned various ways to notate a rhythm using traditional notation, the Kodaly (Ta, Ta, Te-Te Ta!) method, fractions and fraction bars. Then it was time to create rhythm patterns of our own!

Students notated original rhythm patterns and shared them with partners.

Then, it was time for the really good vibrations!

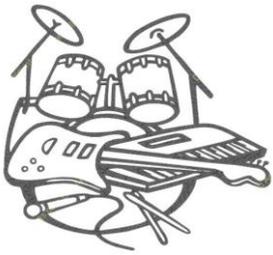
Mr. Cooper enabled students to experience, through a variety of ways, how vibration is the source of sound. Whether it's a vibrating string, reed, a ruler, a bell, or several bottles containing varied amounts of liquid - something is vibrating and creating that beautiful sound! We closely studied frequencies, amplitude (from resonating chambers) and so much more. And what better way to experiment with changing the pitch of a sound than with rulers. Students applied their understanding of how length, tension and material all affect sound by writing compositions using, you guessed it, wooden rulers!

Now it's time to start using what we know.

Students will be moving on to designing and building their own instruments. They chose to build string, woodwind, percussion or pitch-percussion instruments. While in their instrument teams, they decided what materials they could use and how they could construct it. This is probably why they have been asking for cans, bottles, rubber bands or string at home! It's all part of the process!

The residency will culminate in original pieces of music created by the students using their invented instruments. Students will apply all they have learned throughout this dynamic residency to write and perform their pieces. What better way to explore rhythm, beat, tone, vibration, frequency and pitch than through student-created compositions.

Pretty soon, we'll all be diggin' those Good Vibrations!



## Fourth Grade Band

By Cheryl Wiener  
Fourth Grade Band Director



Fourth grade band at John Lyman School is off to a great start. We spent the first few weeks of band playing Recorder Karate songs on our recorders and clapping rhythms during band class. All band students now have instruments and books and the lessons are also going well. During the past few weeks we have had band classes with our band instruments and the band is starting to sound like a band! Students should be practicing five days per week around 15-20 minutes per practice at this point in the year. This year Lyman music teacher, Michael Meurs, is teaching some of our instrument lesson groups and we work together in band class. The instrument lessons give us an opportunity to work with smaller groups and sometimes one on one with students. Most students are remembering to fill out practice journals. Thank you for remembering to sign off on your child's practice journal each week. It is also important to remind your band student to get his/her instrument and book ready the night before lessons and/or band class. Some students are forgetting books and instruments.

We definitely hear progress from week to week when band students are practicing regularly. We are learning to read music by counting, fingering it and singing it. The CD that came with your child's book, Measures of Success, is a wonderful practice tool. It is almost like bringing the band home for a practice session with your child. Practicing can be a lonely pursuit, but using the CD certainly makes practice more fun and motivating.

I wanted you to know that I will be posting on Twitter:  
**Cheryl Wiener@4thgrmusicRSD13**

Here is a link to my Fourth Grade Band Website: **[rsd13fourthgradeband.weebly.com](http://rsd13fourthgradeband.weebly.com)**  
The website has quite a bit of information such as dates for our upcoming Informance (Band Open House) in January. Please check it out.

Here is a link to Mr. Meurs' website where he has a page devoted to instrument lessons:  
<http://lymanmusic.weebly.com>

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me at [cwiener@rsd13.org](mailto:cwiener@rsd13.org) or call me at 860-349-7240 Ext. 5039.

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As a result, the amount of time spent reading independently and collaboratively during Readers' Workshop is steadily increasing. A visitor to any classroom, regardless of grade level, will see students engaged in independent reading books of their choice or texts that are connected to unit and lesson objectives. In the upper grades, students are setting personal goals for school and home reading, further enhancing their enjoyment of and engagement with text. Most importantly, teachers are modeling what it is to be a reader, and that enthusiasm is encouraging the children to take ownership of their reading and contributing to high levels of student engagement during every Readers' Workshop.

### Teaching Artist Residencies

We just concluded our third and fourth grade teaching artist residency with musician Don Cooper. Teaching artist residencies are arts integrated learning experiences that involve collaboration between the teaching artist and classroom teachers. Residencies combine the Strong Arts and Arts Integration components of the Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools approach. Please read Mr. Moriarty's article in this edition of *The Integrated Update* for more information on the residency, but I would like to thank the the John Lyman Parent Association (JLPA) for making this residency (and those that will follow for K-2 students in the spring) possible.

### Student Senate Elections

Third and fourth grade students recently held elections for John Lyman's student senate, an example of the Democratic Practice component of the HOT Schools approach. As part of the election process, students are asked to consider what it takes to be a good senator and classmate, and the children often frame their candidacy through the lens of the Core Ethical Values. Students who choose to run give speeches to their classmates explaining why they would be the best choice to represent the class as a senator. As with real elections, not every child who runs will be elected (there are two senators elected from each 3/4 classroom, and, later in the year, one second grade senator from each 1/2 class), so the class elections serve as a great tool for teaching students to be gracious in victory and defeat.

From a well-being standpoint, the senate elections encourage students to share their talents with others and to think about the many strengths and positive attributes they have to offer our school community. Whether they win or lose, the elections help to highlight and validate the voices of our students and serve as further reinforcement of our Core Ethical Values.

### Kindergarten and Grade 3/4 Concert on Wed., December 7<sup>th</sup>

The kindergarten and 3/4 Chorus concert will be held on Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> under the direction of Mr. Meurs. The performance for students and staff will be held at 2:15 p.m. at John Lyman School. In order to fully accommodate what we expect to be a large audience, **the evening performance will be held at Coginchaug Regional High School at 6:30 p.m.** Mr. Meurs recently sent information home to kindergarten and 3/4 parents and we hope that you will be able to join us for a great evening. The snow date is Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

### Winter Break

Please note that Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> will be an early dismissal day and Winter Break will run from December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Students will return to school on Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>. I hope you enjoy the time at home with your children.

### Morning Drop-Off

For those parents who drop off their children in the morning, I would kindly ask you to be sure to pull up far enough along the curb so as not to interfere with the busses. I understand that there is limited space and I appreciate your patience and understanding. In addition, please remember that if you arrive to school after 8:50 a.m. and there is not a Lyman staff member on the sidewalk, you need to park your car and sign in with your child at the main office.

### Websites and Electronic Communication

*The Integrated Update* is one way that John Lyman communicates with our school community, but it is certainly not the only way. Please be sure to visit teacher websites, follow staff members on Twitter (my handle is @TFord\_LymanCT), or like our Facebook page to stay up to date on classroom and building happenings.

## Social-Emotional Learning through the Second Step Curriculum

By Nilani Shankar

John Lyman School Psychologist

My name is Nilani Shankar. I am the school psychologist at John Lyman this year and I am a new staff member. I am excited to join the warm and caring staff and to be a part of a wonderful community of learners. A new initiative in the school district is to increase the amount of social-emotional learning that students are receiving. I will be working with John Lyman students by teaching *Second Step* lessons in the classrooms. This curriculum helps to increase students' school success by promoting social-emotional competence and self-regulation skills in biweekly, half-hour lessons that target learning, empathy, emotion management, and problem solving abilities.



Organizations such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) have supported the integration of social-emotional learning in the public schools from the preschool to high school levels. *Second Step* is a research-based curriculum, is endorsed by CASEL, and is currently being implemented in other Connecticut school districts. If your son or daughter previously attended another district, he or she might be familiar with the program.



Research shows that social-emotional learning is key because it helps to form a bridge between instruction and learning. According to research, students who can self-regulate are better able to participate in and benefit from classroom instruction. Empathy is an important skill to master because being able to feel or understand what another person is feeling prepares students to manage their own emotions and solve interpersonal problems with others. Empathy is also related to academic success. For emotional management, students who can recognize strong emotions and calm down cope better and are less prone to aggressive behaviors. Students who can solve interpersonal conflicts with peers are less likely to engage in impulsive or aggressive behaviors.

Some of the K and 1/2 classroom lessons include listening skills, focusing attention, following directions, being assertive, and showing care and concern. For the 3/4 classrooms, some of the lessons include empathy and respect, listening with attention, handling put-downs, and dealing with peer pressure.

I hope to positively contribute to your child's social-emotional growth and success this upcoming school year through these lessons. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me ([nshankar@rsd13.org](mailto:nshankar@rsd13.org)).

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John Lyman School is on Facebook! Please 'like' our page to stay up-to-date on what is happening at John Lyman School.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/John-Lyman-School-HOT-School/744497965606093?ref=bookmarks>

In addition, we are also using School Messenger for whole school or grade level communications. Messages disseminated through School Messenger are sent to the e-mail addresses that we have on file, so please make sure that we have your most current addresses.