

LEARNING THE BEAT

WITH MS. ORTIZ

Learning the Beat: Finding Our Rhythm

As everyone has been managing the sweltering heat, in music class we've already begun preparing for our Christmas program in December! One of the key aspects of our preparation is mastering the steady beat. Understanding and maintaining a consistent rhythm is crucial, especially when singing together as a group. This rhythmic foundation, or the "heartbeat" of the music, ensures that every voice aligns. Can you imagine the chaos of some children singing too quickly or too slowly while others are right on time with the music? Our students are learning to keep a steady beat through fun exercises involving clapping, stomping, swaying, and the ever favorite, "penguin waddle"! We are having fun while reinforcing one of the most critical aspects of music performance.



Embracing the Classics: Understanding the Lyrics

Classic carols often come with their own set of challenges. Some songs are written in old English, and the themes can sometimes be complex, especially for the younger grades. As we learn the pitches of the song and how to best use our voices for beautiful singing, we stop along the way to make sure we understand (as best they can at this young age) what it is we're singing about. We discuss how we get to sing the most important message anyone will ever hear so it's important that we know what we're singing and that we sing with excellence. The Kindergarten pleasantly surprised me when they asked their teacher to keep playing one of our songs in class. Apparently there aren't any words "too big" or "too old" for our Kinders!

Building Community Through Song

Our school values collaboration and creativity, and nothing embodies this better than singing together in a choir. The Christmas program is more than just a performance; it's a celebration of our collective effort and unity. Working together towards a common goal fosters a strong sense of community. Each student contributes their unique voice to our sound as the school choir, reflecting the heart of our school's values of collaboration and community. And the choir who sings together also plays and dances together, so we end every class with an engaging play along in which the students play instruments (like egg shakers, tambourines, drums, and sticks) and dance together. Expressing individual movements and sounds all together at the same time to engaging music ends our time together on the most joyful of notes!

