

Learning Through Music

- We use the five processes important to learning music: listening, questioning, creating, performing and reflecting in our other core subjects as well. We breathe, listen, perform, create and celebrate music across the curriculum and it is also expected that every child achieves proficiency in all academic subjects.
- Our students participate in our LTM expeditions, where English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science and Music are integrated. Emphasis is on project- and performance-based learning with clear standards and outcomes. Continuous assessment of performance can ensure effective and authentic evaluation.
- All students have daily general/vocal music instruction and violin lessons twice a week. There is a strong body of research connecting high achievement in academic subjects with the study of music. Our students are poised, confident and show pride in their accomplishments.
- Strong partnerships with music organizations, i.e. New England Conservatory, The Boston Symphony, Berklee College, Boston Lyric Opera, etc.
- Enrichment Opportunities, i.e. children's orchestra, one-on-one instruction.
- Fifth Grade graduation project.

EXAMPLE: There might be a Learning Through Music learning expedition on transmission of sound. Guiding questions might include "How do sound waves work? How does sound get transmitted via radio waves? What careers are there in sound engineering? How does the human ear work? What is hearing impairment? How are speech and music waves different?" as well as other questions on the topic generated by the students themselves. Texts might include the biography of Thomas Edison and Helen Keller. Field work might include a visit to the New England Aquarium to learn about how waves work in the ocean and what similarities they have to sound waves. Students may also visit Massachusetts Eye and Ear Hospital to meet with a specialist in hearing impairment as well as interview the sound engineers at WGBH. In class, students would set up their own sound wave experiments by making home made musical instruments and learn about the full spectrum of waves. How sound is transmitted with a violin would be an ongoing question. In other words, students would develop an expertise on sound transmission and would pursue both group and individual study in areas of particular interest. Their culminating project might be a "Sound Fair" for the entire school showcasing their learning. At the end of the learning expedition, when they picked up their violins, they would have a much deeper understanding of how the sounds were made.