

Welcome to Art & Music at Saint Ambrose Catholic School!

I am really looking forward to a new year of creating music and art with your students. We have a lot to do this year, and I'm eager to get your minds flowing!

Following the Art & Music standards for the Archdiocese of Washington, students at Saint Ambrose Catholic School work to develop artistic thinking in creative problem-solving abilities through both lower- and higher-order thinking skills and social-emotional learning. Students are challenged to participate in what Harvard University's Project Zero calls "Artful Thinking" through Core Thinking Routines ("See, Think, Wonder", "I used to think...Now I think...", "What makes you say that?", etc.) These thinking routines are designed to develop the students creative habits through open-ended questioning and deepen flexible thinking while giving learners voice in their progress. We focus on minimizing fear of mistakes (worry about grades), gaining thinking skills (How do I come up with ideas?), increasing investment in projects, and the authentic development of the individual creative voice. Students engage in active learning in both disciplines, with material meant to challenge and engage while encouraging individual creative growth. The lifelong benefits that students gain through making art and music extend well beyond the classroom and can play an integral part in improved outcomes in every other academic area. In fact, studies show that students who actively participate in art and music demonstrate stronger problem-solving skills; more developed fine motor skills; increased confidence, focus, accountability, perseverance, and decision-making capabilities; as well as increased collaborative and cooperative capabilities. Additionally, adults who continue to create throughout their lives enjoy improved mental and physical health, stress reduction, improved outlooks and deeper ability to focus. Finally, making art and music can help us be more positive, hopeful people.

In the music room, we focus on healthy singing habits for young voices (especially breathing), composition and movement. We work with a variety of pitched and non-pitched percussion, as well as recorders and ukuleles. Our studies include Orff, Kodaly, and Dalcroze methodologies in order to meet the needs of the whole student. ***Please note: In the 2020-2021 academic year, we will not be singing, playing recorders or using classroom instruments in class. Singing is one of the most effective ways to spread Coronavirus. Students are encouraged to sing at home. For more information on singing and virus spread, read [this](#).***

In the art room, we focus on Learning for Artistic Behavior through projects that encompass a wide variety of materials and media. There are many opportunities for choice-based learning, and students are encouraged to explore their individual voice rather than imitating others' work.

For a complete overview of the Art & Music programs at Saint Ambrose Catholic School, please see the [2020-2021 Art & Music Syllabus](#).

I look forward to creating Art & Music with your student, and to helping them discover their unique creative voices.

Mrs. Kathryn Andrews