



# Butler Music Dept Newsletter

*The mission of the Butler Area School District music department is to provide a sequential and relevant music education that enables its students to become musically engaged global citizens.*

## Winter 2019

MODERN BAND AT MCQUISTION ELEMENTARY

PMEA FESTIVALS

### Modern Band

Modern Band (pictured above) is new at McQuiston! We now have THREE different bands meeting before school. We are learning by playing music and getting experience playing keyboards, ukuleles, and percussion, along with singing! More information on the Modern Band philosophy can be found at [littlekidsrock.org](http://littlekidsrock.org). Mrs. Carrie Persichini is the McQuiston music teacher.

### Symphony Concert

Students in the Butler Senior High Mixed Ensemble and Women's Ensemble performed alongside students in the Seneca Valley Chamber Ensemble as part of the Butler Symphony's Holiday Concert December 7.

This is the fourth such collaboration between Butler and Seneca Choirs, and represents our sixth collaboration with the Butler Symphony. This year, the choirs joined them in singing *Hail to Christmas*, *Donkey Carol*, *Christmas Sing-a-long*, *Chanukah Selections*, and *Musicalogical Journey Through the Twelve Days of Christmas*.

This was a large undertaking, but it is a valuable experience collaborating with a professional orchestra. Members of the Butler Senior High Orchestra performed for the symphony audience in the lobby prior to the concert as well.

### New Band Uniforms

The Golden Tornado Marching Band debuted their new uniforms on the field this 2019-2020 school season. The uniforms were designed by the staff and produced by the Stanbury Uniform Company.

The overall process to acquire the uniforms was a true labor of love due to the current economic times the Butler Area School District is facing. A strong commitment to the arts was made when Dr. White and the Butler School Board of Directors agreed to replace the uniforms purchased in 2005. The typical lifespan of a uniform is 10-12 years. The uniforms being replaced were used for 15 seasons.



### Music Nights Out

On March 22, 2019 members of the orchestra enjoyed an Orchestra Night Out, when they traveled to Pittsburgh to hear the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. They got to hear the Peer Gynt Suite (Edvard Grieg), and then on their spring concert, they performed the suite's final movement, the famous *In the Hall of the Mountain King*.

On February 7, 2020 students in the senior high choirs will travel to Pittsburgh for dinner at the Hard Rock Café, followed by the Broadway music, *Miss Saigon*. Much like the orchestra trip, the choirs will perform a selection from *Miss Saigon* in their 2020 spring concert.

### Ukelele Grant Awarded

The music department would like to extend their thanks to the Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation for awarding Mrs. Erevia's creative teaching grant. This generous grant has made it possible for Middle School students to learn to play the ukulele in their music classrooms.



## Conno Students Keep the BEAT

Connoquenessing elementary students use the acronym BEAT to represent Behavior, Effort, Attitude, and Teamwork in their PBIS (Positive Behavior Incentive System) program. At the beginning of the school year, music teacher Cortney Christoforetti taught the fourth grade classes a short welcome song, which was then transformed into a singing and speech piece in Rondo form. Mrs. Christoforetti led the students to create lyrics about the Conno BEAT, while keeping the steady beat! Students sang, played instruments, and spoke their rhythmic speech piece they composed. Students were so proud of themselves that they wanted to show their teacher, Mrs. Baker. Mrs. Baker was so impressed she wanted to show the principal, Mrs. Hull. Mrs. Hull was so impressed that she wanted to show the entire board of school directors! And so on Monday, November 18, a group of Connoquenessing fourth graders performed their "Welcome Song with a BEAT" for the Butler Area School District Board of Directors.



## Music Centers

Elementary students at Northwest Elementary and Emily Brittain Community Partnership and Demonstration School had the unique opportunity to experience music centers in all grade levels. Music centers are hands on learning stations where students can independently learn and practice various music concepts that enhance their overall music education. These activities not only reinforce the concepts that students are learning in class, but it also exposes students to additional music ideas that do not fit into the everyday curriculum.

As students arrived at music the first week in November, Mrs. Motta, the long-term substitute teacher, greeted them in the hall by saying that today in music there would be no chairs, no singing, and no instruments. Although confused at first, students responded really well to this varied instruction. Students were focused on learning, collaborating with their peers, displaying soaring behavior, and having a lot of fun! Collin, a 4th grade student at Northwest, said this about the instrument go fish game "it was really helpful to be able to see all the instruments and be able to compare them." Sammi Jo, also a 4th grade student at Northwest, made this remark "it was fun to be able to work with my friends and do music at the same time!" Overall this was a very positive experience for everyone as evident by the fact that students are already asking when they will get a chance to do centers again!

## Music Stand returned

In the fall of 2015, after Oakland Elementary closed, principal Barbara Frantz ventured back out to Oakland in search of more chairs for the Emily Brittain music room. While she did find more chairs, she also found a beautiful music stand. The decorative piece commemorated the work of Sal Signorino, an elementary and junior high band director in the Butler Area School District. The music stand was incredibly ornate, but quite small and not practical for the K-4 music classroom. The music stand sat at Emily Brittain until this fall when elementary music teacher Cortney Christoforetti joined other fellow musicians at the Grove City College Alumni Marching Band Homecoming Event. There she met retired music teacher and Butler alumnus, Matt Boice. They reminisced about Butler, and Mrs. Christoforetti asked Mr. Boice if he knew Mr. Signorino. He knew Mr. Signorino, and more importantly, he knows his daughter, Paula. After lining up some logistics, Mr. Boice came back to Butler to return the decorative music stand to Mr. Signorino's daughter Paula. She was extremely grateful and said she would keep it in her music studio and think of her father's impact on all the students he taught at Butler.

## Butler GoldenTuneadoes



Introducing the new Butler Show Choir, called the Butler Golden Tuneadoes, pictured above. This is a vocal enrichment group for grades 9-12 which meets 3-4 PM on Fridays in the SHS choir room. The group is directed by Mrs. Tepper, and accompanied by Dr. Hesel, but is intended to be student driven. It has been well received by students, as we have close to 30 members who dance and sing. We did a Menchie's fundraiser in October and made about \$77. This group will perform in choral concerts, the FAB Showcase, and around the community.

## Rock Orchestra Honored

The Butler Rock Orchestra has been selected to perform at the PMEA State conference in the Poconos this April. This huge honor continues a tradition of excellence in Butler ensembles enjoyed by the choirs in 2010 and 2012, the flute ensemble in 2015, and the percussion ensemble in 2017. Congratulations to Mrs. Black the Rock Ensemble for this huge accomplishment!

## Focus on a Graduate:

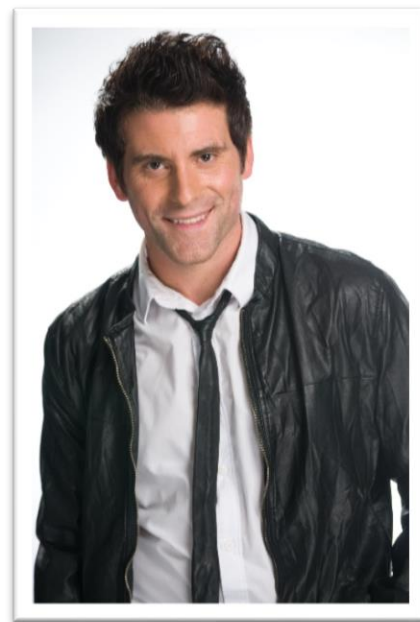
### Elliot Roth

The Butler Area School District Music Department is proud of all its students as they achieve learning and performing goals. We hold in high esteem the students who go on to find successes in a variety of careers. In this column, we would like to brag about successes of our graduates and fill the community in on their recent professional activities. Elliot Roth was very active in our music department as a student, and he is now making his mark in the music scene in New York City.

### Biography

Hailed by the New York Times for his "silky smooth voice,, Elliot is a masters graduate of the prestigious Manhattan School of Music jazz arts program. Broadway credits include "Our Sinatra" and "A Christmas Carol." Off-Broadway credits include Village Voice lauded role as 'Jesus' in Jesus Christ Superstar in Concert at the Living Room. He has appeared in Downbeat Magazine as one of the area's "Top 20

Performers to Watch," and is one of the most versatile performers in the tri-state area. He has headlined and musically directed shows at Birdland, Joe's Pub, Green Room 42, 54 Below, Symphony Space, Apollo Theater and more. Elliot is also resident music director of Two River Theater's (home of "Be More Chill" world premiere) summer intensives, and is an adjunct professor of voice as well as co-creator of the pop/rock voice lab in the musical theater department of Marymount Manhattan College. [www.theElliotRoth.com](http://www.theElliotRoth.com)



## Elliot's Reflection on Ways that Music at Butler Served as Preparation

While attending Butler Area High School I was provided incredible musical opportunities both within the school music curriculum as well as through extracurricular activities. The senior high school choir for instance, under the leadership of consummate musician and educator Bryan Hesel, was a model curriculum. Through incorporation of the Pennsylvania National Standards of Arts, emphasis was placed on not only music theory but also singing technique. I would not be the artist or teacher I am today without the foundations and opportunities provided for me during my high school years at Butler Area. We were given opportunities through fundraising to visit places such as New York City; participating in master classes under music greats such as Grammy and Emmy nominee Judith Clurman, among others.

Alongside in-school activity, Dr. Hesel also provided myself and three other students direction and mentorship as we formed a vocal quintet that eventually went on to sing concerts in a mini tour of Italy. Additionally, I was able to participate in District, State and Regional choir; this provided an opportunity to be introduced to a diverse group of students from all over the tri-state area; many of whom I have been reconnected with in New York City years later.

As a composer/arranger, teaching professional and performer I would not have reached my current level of success without my experiences at Butler Area High School. Incredible contributions to the arts in education are happening in Butler County, and I am eternally grateful to have been a part of such an incredible learning environment.



### Opening Convocation Performances

Students in the choirs and orchestras collaborated to perform for the teachers at their opening in-service session this August. Dr. White had the idea to create a video of students acknowledging ways in which their teachers helped them find success, and to accompany the video with a live performance of *You Raise Me Up*. To prepare, the choir and orchestra members held a mini-camp on the Friday preceding the Monday in-service. The performance was well-received and appreciated by the teachers eager to begin their school year. The mini-camp afforded an opportunity for students to become reacquainted and to make music prior to the official start of the school year. The photo to the left shows the choral singers in the pit, and the orchestra on stage in front of the video.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 7: Senior High Choirs sing with Butler Symphony – IHS auditorium 7:30 pm. Tickets available at [www.butlersymphony.org](http://www.butlersymphony.org)
- December 10: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Holiday Concert – IHS auditorium 7:00 pm
- December 11: Intermediate Orchestra grades 7, 8, and 9 – IHS auditorium 7:00 pm
- December 12: Senior High Orchestra concert, grades 10, 11, and 12 – IHS auditorium 7:00 pm
- December 16: Middle School Choir concert – SHS auditorium 6:30 pm
- December 17: 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir concert – IHS auditorium – 6 pm
- December 17: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir concert – IHS auditorium – 7:30 pm
- December 18: Senior High Choir Concert – SHS auditorium – 7:30 pm
- January 16-18: PMEA District Choir – Greenville High School
- January 23: Jr. High District Choir – Mercer High School
- January 30-February 1: PMEA District Orchestra
- February 7: Choir and Orchestra night out in Pittsburgh – orchestra to PSO, choir to *Miss Saigon*
- February 11: Choir party grades 8-12 – SHS choir room 6:00-8:00 pm
- February 13-15: PMEA District Band at Butler Intermediate High School
- February 26-28: PMEA Region Choir – Hickory High School
- March 12-14: PMEA Region Orchestra
- March 25: Music in our Schools Month Performance Grades 5-12: 6pm SHS gymnasium
- April 4: FAB (Fine Art and Beyond) Showcase – IHS multiple venues
- April 22-25: PMEA All-state Choir, orchestra, band
- See the spring newsletter for May concert dates or log onto our music department website at <http://www.basdk12.org/domain/1509>

Pictured below are students making music at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade choir party

