

TEACHER FEATURE
A JAZZED UP, NEW BAND P.14

HISTORY LESSON
TUNING FORWARD P.10

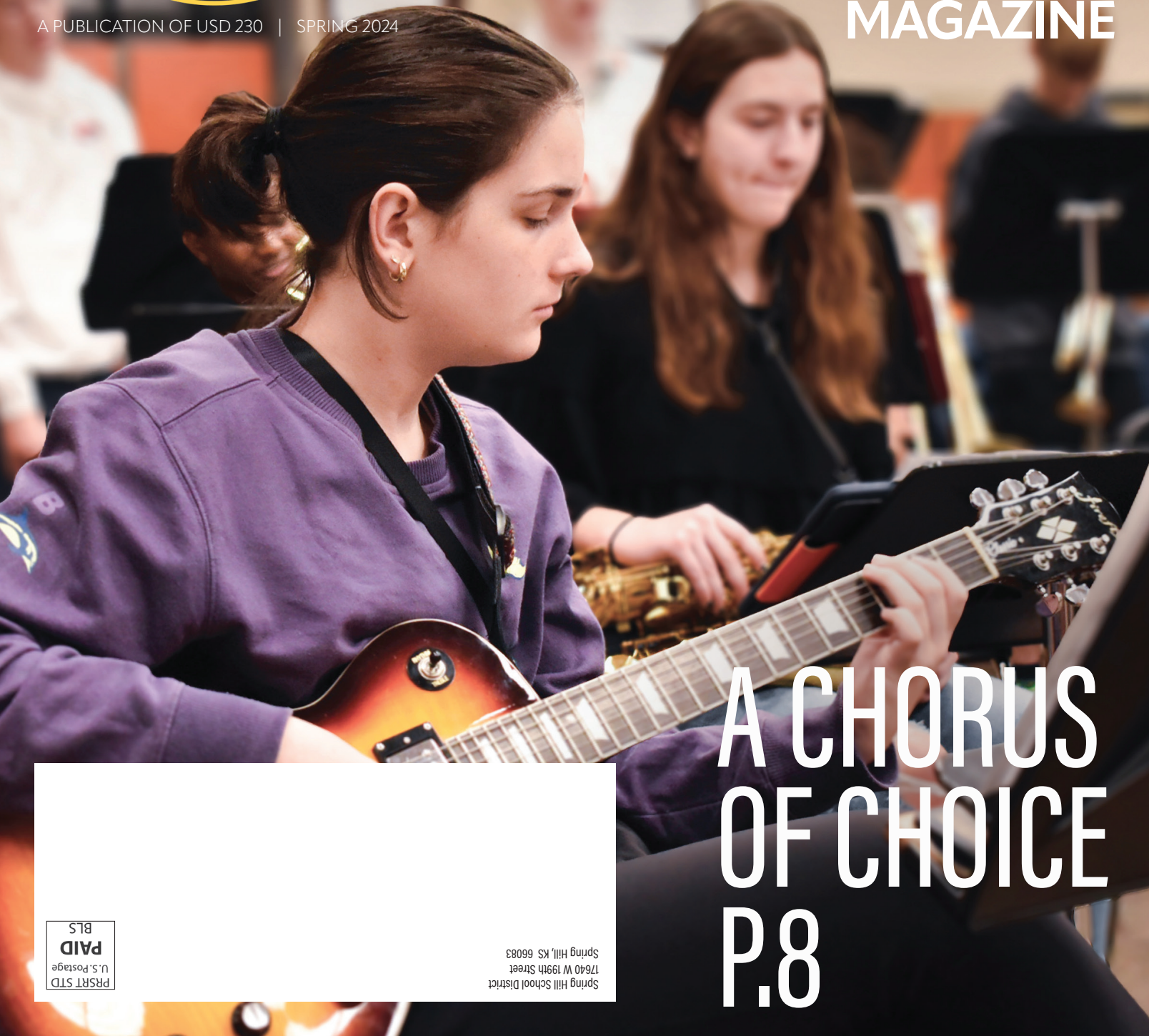
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
CLASS OF 2009 P.18



SPRING HILL

SCHOOLS
MAGAZINE

A PUBLICATION OF USD 230 | SPRING 2024



A CHORUS
OF CHOICE
P.8

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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As we approach the end of another school year, it's crucial to reflect on the invaluable role that music programs play in our educational institutions. Music isn't merely a subject confined to the realm of entertainment; it's a powerful tool for cognitive development, emotional expression, and community building. Thus, the presence of robust music programs in our schools is not just desirable but essential for the holistic growth of our students.

First and foremost, music education enhances cognitive abilities. Numerous studies have shown a positive correlation between musical training and academic performance, particularly in areas such as mathematics and language. Learning to read music notation, understanding rhythm, and mastering complex compositions stimulate neural pathways, fostering sharper critical thinking skills and improving memory retention. By integrating music into the curriculum, schools provide students with a well-rounded education that nurtures both artistic and analytical abilities.

Moreover, music serves as a universal language for emotional expression. In an increasingly fast-paced and interconnected world, students often grapple with stress, anxiety, and social pressures. Music offers a therapeutic outlet for processing emotions and channeling creative energy constructively. Whether through playing instruments, singing in choirs, or composing original pieces, students cultivate resilience, empathy, and self-awareness. By fostering a supportive environment for artistic expression, music programs empower students to navigate the complexities of adolescence with confidence and grace.

Beyond its individual benefits, music has the power to unify communities and bridge cultural divides. School bands, orchestras, and ensembles bring together



students from diverse backgrounds, fostering collaboration, mutual respect, and a sense of belonging. Through rehearsals and performances, students learn the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. These experiences instill lifelong values that extend far beyond the confines of the classroom, preparing students to become empathetic leaders and engaged citizens in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

This issue of Spring Hill Schools Magazine highlights a few of the various facets of music embedded throughout the district. As we celebrate the achievements of another school year, I say thank you to all stakeholders that continuously work together to ensure that Spring Hill Schools is truly a great place to learn.

Have a great summer,

Link W. Luttrell, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Twitter: @usd230supt

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SPRING 2024

VOL. 10, NO. 3

Cover Photo:

Madeline Weaver, 9, plays their bass during a jazz band rehearsal. Photo by Olivia Tarvin.

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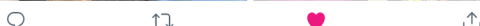
Spring Hill Early Learning Academy @SHEarlyLearningAcademy
From sensory play to interactive projects, every day is an adventure filled with hands-on learning at the Spring Hill Early Learning Academy. [#Learn230](#)



Dayton Creek Elementary @DCESCavaliers
Our student council excitedly led the launch of our school store last week! Our students used their Leader in Me habit tickets to buy prizes from the store. [#Learn230](#)



Prairie Creek Elementary @PCESMustangs
Some fun pictures with Mrs. Tapia's fifth graders trying on their eclipse glasses before venturing outside to witness the awesome eclipse yesterday. [#Learn230](#)



Spring Hill Elementary @SHESColts
Second grade is keeping track of and completing their goals! [#Learn230](#)



Timber Sage Elementary @TSESRangers
We had a wonderful morning rounding up soon-to-be-kindergartners! Welcome kids! [#Learn230](#)



Wolf Creek Elementary @WCESWranglers
Miss Gorrell's Kindergarteners enjoyed their visit to a local greenhouse to learn all about plants! [#Learn230](#)



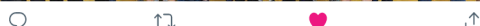
Forest Spring Middle @FSMSChargers
"It was interesting and fun to see a live reenactment," said Nate K about the Civil War Surgery Simulation that our eight grade students got to experience. [#Learn230](#)



Spring Hill Middle @SHSM Mavericks
Track competition began last Tuesday when the district's three middle schools met for the first annual Spring Hill Cup. [#Learn230](#)



Woodland Spring Middle @WSMSStallions
Our Science Olympiad team is bringing home THIRD IN THE STATE!!! We are so proud of all of our students. [#Learn230](#)



Spring Hill High @SHHS_Broncos
The Jazz Band traveled to Washburn on April fifth to perform in the Coleman Hawkins Jazz Festival and work with JCCC faculty member Ryan Heineken. [#Learn230](#)



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RECORDER REWIND

By Kathlyn Tran &
Bryanna Pierson,
SHHS Student Journalists

A common, shared experience that many students who went to elementary school within the district are familiar with is the recorder unit.

The recorder unit is completed during third or fourth grade. From start to finish, it teaches kids how to play the recorder and introduces them to an easy to learn instrument.

"It was definitely weird, but a new experience. And I had to warm up to it, like I couldn't get used to it but I also like wasn't not liking it," Ainsley Olcott, 8, said.

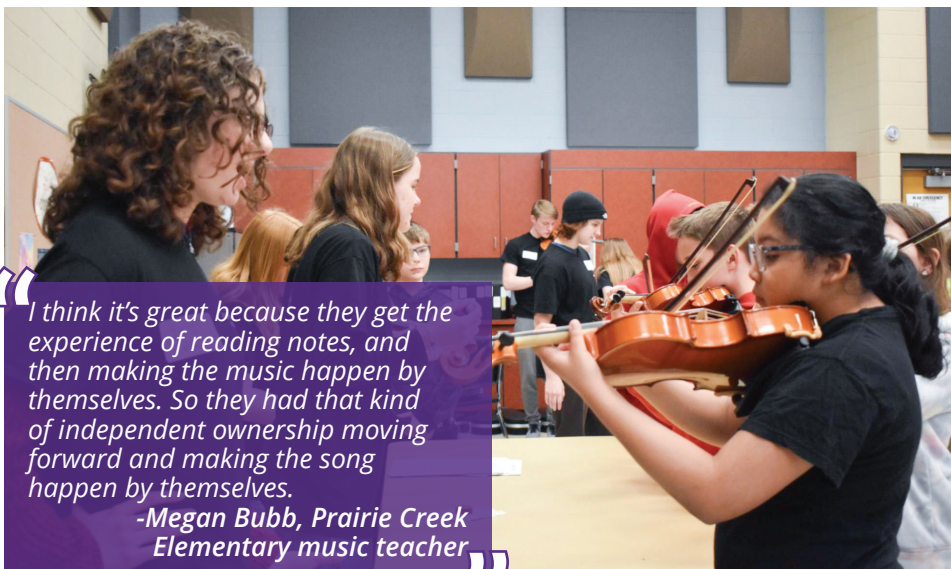
Whether they have been anticipating the unit from their older siblings or they experienced it without any prior knowledge, it has left a lasting impression on many students.

"I had Mrs. Bubb, she was a great teacher. That's where I learned how to play the recorder and it gave me my love for playing instruments and music," Emma Olcott, 12, said.

For many students, it may have been their first time playing an instrument and reading the music necessary to play.



Maryanne McNally, 11; Nathan Montgomery, 11, and Monet Edwards, 11 help elementary students interested in band.



I think it's great because they get the experience of reading notes, and then making the music happen by themselves. So they had that kind of independent ownership moving forward and making the song happen by themselves.

-Megan Bubb, Prairie Creek Elementary music teacher

This kind of early exposure can spark a child's interest in music that they can continue even as they leave elementary school.

"I've always loved music, but knowing that I could learn how to play music and make my own music just made me want to go into music even more. I joined band in fifth grade and I was going between band and orchestra; I wanted to play clarinet but also wanted to play violin. I chose to go into band to play the clarinet," Olcott said.

The recorder can also be a good entry-way into another instrument.

"I think [guitar] is harder than the recorder. It was a lot different than the guitar. It's a lot lighter. I want to play the clarinet so I can go to the saxophone,"

-Henry Olcott, 5

Another fun and memorable moment of the recorder unit is the recorder "karate" activity.

"I do recorder karate where they earn a belt for songs. They just think it's exciting to keep going and earn more stuff, and then they recognize that you're doing more difficult things so you get more belts," Bubb said.

This activity can also help build character during a crucial time of a child's development.

"I think that's just a nice life lesson too, if you work hard,

Jillian Straight, 11, helps Dayton Creek Elementary students get familiar with the violin.

you get farther in life. That's one thing that's nice about recorder karate, too, is they work individually. Some kids can go way above and beyond, and then others that need more help can." Bubb said.

Music can have a lasting effect on a person, even more so if they are younger.

"I think so because it could really spark a passion for little kids to find their passion in music and that could go a really long way. Some benefits I see is [playing an instrument] it helps with your mental and emotional state. It can also help with school because you have a sharper mind because you get to learn how to read music as well as multitasking," Olcott said.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Kathlyn Tran and this is my second year of SPUB. In my first year I've gained experience in writing, designing, and photographing. I think journalism, especially student journalism, informs people and gives them a voice.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Bryanna Pierson. I am the senior ads and graphics manager this year. This will be my second year on staff and I am so excited! I love being able to write and seek out diverse stories and being able to speak out about important topics.

Chorus of Choice

By Hannah King & Luke Torrez,
SHHS Student Journalists

This year SHHS introduced a new program in place of the usual advisory, or homeroom, class. Targeted seminar is required by all students to attend two days a week.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, students attend all their regular classes along with advisory. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, students attend a 25 minute targeted seminar. Every three weeks, students fill out a form that allows them to share their preferences of what course to attend. Students can attend courses with topics based on anything from Healthy Smoothies to A.P. Study Hours. Some targeted seminars are for intervention purposes; teachers can request students they know need extra support with certain skills. This allows students to choose how they spend their time and have an opportunity to get extra assistance from teachers.

The music teachers have taken this opportunity to the next level with their small ensemble targeted seminar for both band and orchestra students. This time allows students to practice their instruments with a small group in order to prepare for Regional Solo and Ensemble Festival. This also allows time for these ensembles to meet with the band or orchestra teacher in order to get technical assistance.

"We are trying to serve the students who are getting ready for the Solo Ensemble Regional Festival, which takes place on April 13, at DeSoto this year. They typically get together [in small groups on their own, because] this is student driven, but we coach them and work with them. It's a good time for three to five of



Addie Bond, 11, grins as Tristan Bartley creates a connection with them during their targeted seminar practice time.

them to get together and do some work a couple times a week for 25 minutes," Taygun Ozakinci, orchestra director, explained.

Though 25 minutes seems like a fairly limited time, it provides opportunities for practice that would otherwise be impossible. Solos and ensembles are practiced primarily independently, so the small ensemble targeted seminar gives the students the chance to get the teachers' input and critiques while also giving them space to work on their pieces.

"I think it is the best opportunity for the kids because oftentimes, they're kind of on their own to work on solos and ensembles, and they go and they play at festivals, so it's important that they're prepared. This time does allow us to, you know, work with them one-on-one," said Tristan Bartley, band director.

With a learning opportunity that is structured in both the teachers' and students' favor, the possibilities truly are endless. The music targeted seminars have incorporated students who have a variety of approaches to how they use their time. There is no definitive metric that will measure the value of these targeted seminars, but from a teacher's perspective, the results are exponentially clear.

The success of the small ensemble seminar can be attributed to the space it gives students to work on

"I see progress every day. Some kids come in to work on soloing in jazz band and stuff like that, and I see that show up pretty regularly. So this has had a pretty distinct impact pretty quickly on kids' preparation and their playing abilities and their response to listening and things like that," said Bartley.

what they believe to be important. However, it differs from the standard, independent practice with the role of the involved teacher. By ensuring that the groups are being intentional rather than all over the place, there is no doubt that their goals will be reached.

"People are freely wandering around doing their own thing, but we encourage them to have some kind of plan. You know, have a plan in place, so you're not going into the practice room and just winging it. So, for that 25 minute period, as they walk in, I say 'what are you guys

going to do today? Do you have a plan?" stated Ozakinci.

As students get time to grow with their music, they also grow as people. The growth stems from the students choosing their own areas of focus which proves as a motivator for students time and time again.

"Targeted seminar is more focused, and more students are where they want to be. Whether it is with their friends, or with the content area that they need to be working on. To me, that is meeting their social and emotional needs more than just being in advisory," Ozakinci said "Targeted seminar is a go. Let's do more and more."

SHHS is excited to pave the way to spread similar ideas amongst the district. The course style has been a success so far, and while many teachers have enjoyed hosting new seminars, there is always room for improvement in the minds of the educators. Through the next rotations of seminars, teachers will strive to improve the system and create new ideas to encourage academic creativity in the classroom especially as the program extends into the next academic year.

Lily Meek, 10, and Ozakinci smile as they reflect on Meek's growth with their solo.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Hannah King I am a SHHS junior and I'm involved in SPUB, StuCO, band, jazz band, Links, and FFA! I have a passion for agricultural communications and I want to share the stories of the district and love to explore the possibilities of journalism.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Luke Torrez. I have been involved in student publications, student council, peer assistance and leadership, and speech and debate. Through debate, I have discovered the importance of sharing information about the things that I believe in.

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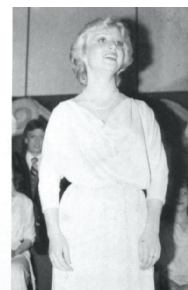
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Since 1917, Spring Hill High's music department has been generational and evolving for over one hundred years.

A short snippet in the 1917 yearbook details that *"during the first part of the year a class in band instruments was organized by **Fred Meek** for the purpose of preparing young men for the town band".*

The next available yearbook, the 1929 issue, shows that the music departments had expanded, and for 25 cents, you could buy admission to the *Gardner Music Contest* and see student performers compete.



Madrigals provide music

"It's a fun group, hard-working and easy to get along with," said Audrey Mohn of the Madrigals. The Madrigals are a select group of 24 students who perform at community activities throughout the year.

Members of Madrigals are director A. Mohn, M. Lester, E. Williams, M. Slaughter, L. Zimmerman, J. Smith, R. Bapteste, middle: M. Sanders, S. Riley, E. Jones, M. Bowman, D. Beall, K. Lawson, K. Salchirich, R. Olson; back: S. Procter, D. Cutting, P. Cochran, T. Roberts, R. Hill, R. Ellis, D. Ulfeldt, S. DeVries, J. Howard, T. T. Roberts, J. Zimmerman, R. Ellis, K. Lawson enjoy rehearsal after practicing music at Quill & Pen. M. Lester sings solo during Highland activities.

Students performed songs such as, "*Sing Me A Chanty*" and "*In the Time of Roses*". The Boys and Girls Glee Clubs were rated "excellent" and "superior" at local State competitions.

In the 70's, music continued to expand with the introduction of *Beginning Chorus, Jazz Band, Destiny and Barbershop Quartet.*

The 80's was filled with all music departments and clubs winning awards and further expanding. The music choices ranged from Broadway Hits to Beatles' songs. In **1988**, *Spring Hill High became the first school in Kansas to have a guitar class.*

Students were “*shaping a world of their own*” by performing the comedy, horror musical “*Little Shop of Horrors*” and almost doubling the band class numbers.



FORWARD

By Shelby Hatcher & Ashlyn Watson,
SHHS Student Journalists



1940s

Along with touches of humor like "Wayne recovering from a serious accident-slipped on a banana peel", the music programs continued marching on and expanding.

1950s

In the 1950's student numbers in all music clubs and **Drum and Bugle Corps** were added in 1952.

1960s

Music started to come more to the forefront, a "Best of Everything Music" in the yearbook details what an "honor it is to compete in State Music Festival". In 1965, the Madrigals was started.

2000s

Y2K brought about a dip back into the past with "The Music Man" being performed as a musical and Destiny and Madrigals performed songs from "White Christmas". In 2003, Strings qualified for State, the first time in its 12-year history.

2010s

The theater program "gleaned success with the musical, 'Pippin'", and after band competitions, students would go out to eat to celebrate. Many new music classes were also added during the 2010's, like instrumental music, music theory and applied music.

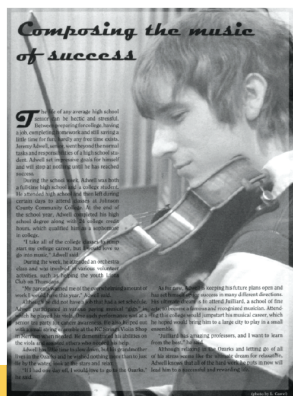
2020s

Now, music is found in all levels of learning at Spring Hill Schools and is an integral part of a child's education. **Music is used not just in music class, but in every classroom.**

BOYS' ENSEMBLE



GIRLS' ENSEMBLE



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Shelby Hatcher and I am a Junior at SHHS. I have been a part of the yearbook staff for two years. Outside of working on staff, I am part of 4-H and the NBHA. I am excited to continue working with Journalism. When I graduate I would like to pursue a career in Psychology or Interior Design.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! My name is Ashlyn Watson and I am a senior at SHHS. This is my first year in the USD 230 district. Outside of working on the staff, I am a part of theatre and video production. I am looking forward to the rest of my time at SHHS, and excited to pursue my career in Journalism at KU this fall.

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A Jazzed Up, New Band

By Macey Chaulk & Danny Heinen, SHHS Student Journalists



Tristan Bartley has taken over Dan Wooge's place as Spring Hill High's director, while Wooge has moved to working with students at Woodland Spring Middle.

Bartley used to direct at McLouth High School, and remarks on the changes between the two schools.

"There are a lot of differences between my old school and this one. This school has 1000 more people in it, literally. It's a much bigger environment. I think there's a lot more kids here who just do band and that's their thing, as opposed to everyone having to do everything all of the time," Bartley said.

Bartley feels that his adjusting to Spring Hill came easily.

"I don't think I've had to change how I teach or any of my philosophies. Having a lot more people to work with, other directors and things like that has been very different in having to manage that," Bartley said.

The jazz band doesn't currently require an audition, but that doesn't mean that the jazz band is unskilled.

"We have a guy who is young and ambitious, and I think that's good for our program especially since we have a growing school and program," Chase Bond, 12, said.

While some feel that the changes to the band are fueled by the change of directors, others like **Jadon Kadera-Redmond**, feel that it was a natural progression.

"I think the Jazz band was already naturally growing and there were far more people coming in. I think the new experiences he's adding on to it are definitely helping [with] these people being really invested in this whole thing," Kadera-Redmond said.

The care put into the band has also been a noticeable change.

The jazz band synchronizes each of their parts for a song they've been working on. (Photo O. Tarvin)

"Definitely. There's guys and girls in there who really care a lot more now. It's because we all know there is a goal and an expectation of what we have for ourselves," Bond said.

For many, the change they expected is not what they actually received.

"[It was difficult] for maybe a month, and I don't think it was too bad after that cause then again he's really easy to work with and he created a really good culture and environment to be a part of," Bond said.

Bartley draws ideas for how he wanted to organize his band based on of his experience being a part of high school band.

"There were parts of my high school band experience that I really enjoyed. I had a really great jazz band director I feel like I wanted to do things well and go out there and try new stuff. The way I teach is kind of in spite of my own high school experience as opposed to because of it. I think the structure of class and the priority on musicality and things like that is something I've taken with me," Bartley said.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Danny Heinen and I'm in my first year in SPUB. I enjoy almost all elements of SPUB, especially writing and interviewing. I am most excited to make all people feel heard, which is one of the most important purposes of SPUB and journalism in general.



ABOUT THE JOURNALIST

Hi! I'm Macey Chaulk and this is my first year in SPUB. Throughout my childhood, I always had a passion for writing. I am excited to be able to become more involved with the SPUB community and meet new people. Outside of school, I am involved in soccer and like to spend my free time reading, writing, and baking.

HARMONY IN THE HALLS



By Marissa Winkel, for Spring Hill Schools

Q&A with Elise Luce, Spring Hill Schools' music teacher, showcasing music at the elementary and middle level.

Among the numerous concepts covered in elementary music, some that Luce covers are beat, rhythm, pitch, timbre, instruments, notation, improvisation, composition, and performance.

Q: What concepts do you teach?

A: "One of my favorite units to teach is *The Science of Sound* and we explore how we hear music while exploring sound waves, vibration, frequency, and pitch. We explore what classifies as an instrument and how the instruments create sound...Currently, I have a few grade levels working on music programs for upcoming performances. I also have fourth and fifth grade exploring rhythm with jump bands. First grade is practicing rhythm and rhymes."

Q: Do our music classes prepare students for potential interest in vocal music or musical instruments? What do our music classes prepare students for?

A: "Every music class we provide for our students is a chance for them to experience music and learn from it... I've had former students tell me they decided to play their instrument when they were in my second grade music class or that they joined choir because they loved our elementary music programs."

this is the time for students to explore their interests and grow.

Within our music programs, preparation for vocal and instrumental music is started at the primary level. Once students hit middle school, they have the opportunity to dive deeper into specialized areas of music.

Q: What fun things are students pursuing in middle school music?

A: "This year, Forest Spring Middle has combined sixth and eighth grade for one choir class...This class is all about using your voice to make music. We work with rhythms, pitches, and harmonies to create music together."

Having knowledge in the realm of *Vocal Pedagogy*, the science of vocal instruction in its physiological function, Luce has touched a bit on vocal and hearing health for both her primary and secondary education levels.

"We have had a few discussions on vocal health...I want them to understand how to use and care for their voices, especially at the middle school level where their voices can change both rapidly and dramatically."

Q: Are there any particular accomplishments you would like to highlight from any of your music classes this year?

A: "Our performances tend to be great fun. Concerts and programs are the most visible aspect of music classes, but they only scratch the surface of the accomplishments we make in the classroom each and everyday. My kindergarteners love to dance. My first graders are masters at rhythmic dictation. Second grade is full of talent at rhyming and reading rhythm. Third grade has shown they are capable of great expression in their music. My fourth and fifth graders have shown they are willing to dig deeper and try even the most unusual or challenging activities I throw at them. And my choir students have demonstrated flexibility and perseverance as we have navigated a combined 6-8 choir."

I am incredibly proud of all of my students.



Elise Luce, Spring Hill Schools' music teacher, teaches music classes at both **Forest Spring Middle** and **Dayton Creek Elementary**. Luce teaches approximately 200 students of ages ranging from five to 13 years old everyday. Through Forest Spring Middle, Luce teaches a combined sixth through eighth grade choir class. Through Dayton Creek, Luce has a passionate focus on Elementary Music as she is pursuing a PhD in Music Education.

Q: What fun activities are students pursuing in elementary music?

A: "In 2014 the National Standards for Music Education were updated and Kansas quickly followed suit. The standards are now built around three central concepts: *Creating, Performing, and Responding.*"

Elementary Music is foundational for how students explore, engage in, and understand music that they may encounter throughout their lifetime.



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6th - 8th grade: 10:00am-11:00am

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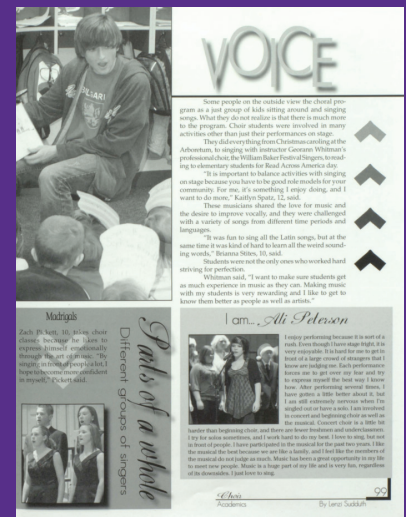
I graduated in 2009 and I went to the University of Kansas and got a BFA in Vocal Performance. I studied both musical theater and opera. I currently work as the Vice President and Managing Broker for ReeceNichols Real Estate, a Berkshire Hathaway affiliate.

I developed an interest in music very early on. I learned to read music by turning pages for my mom when she would accompany the church choir. I quickly found that I enjoyed singing, and also never turned down an opportunity to learn an instrument. In middle school, I discovered how much I enjoyed acting and being on stage, which presented even more opportunities to perform and share my love for music. As someone who was not particularly athletic, I was lucky to find opportunities to develop a sense of community and team work through the performing arts.

I met my wife, Sara Goering, through my love for performing, and so many incredible friends. I also refer to music as my "therapy." I am often found at the piano or sitting with my guitar, playing whatever comes to mind. This is a release for me, and it is an incredibly important part of how I process information in other parts of my life. Without my love for music, I'm not sure if anything could replace it.

I performed professionally for nearly a decade with *Lyric Opera Kansas City*, and hope to return once my three kids are a bit older. Sara and I are Co-Associate Music Directors at Country Club Christian Church (2016-Present), where we work with various groups to add beauty to our worship services. We previously led a youth theater organization, *Madison Avenue Performing Arts*, making sure that children have the same opportunity I had to find their community and team building skills through the performing arts.

A funny memory from school was right around the time that flash mobs became "a thing," our Madrigals Group organized our version of a flash mob during lunch. It was a bit disruptive. I don't remember what we were singing, but I remember the vice principal hollering "NO" about five minutes after we started. We just kept going, and eventually found ourselves running out of the cafeteria and finding refuge in the choir room, where we pretended that nothing ever happened.



Images from the Spring Hill High School 2009 yearbook.

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