



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: MUSIC

Our music program is growing!

Father-son duo Mitch and Forrest Brennan are working together to grow the Chimacum music program.

A fifteen-year veteran of the district with over three decades in education, Mitch Brennan teaches general music and band at Chimacum's elementary, junior high, and high schools. This year his son, Forrest (inset photo), has joined the Chimacum team to teach percussion at the high school. Both Brennans studied music at the University of Washington, though Forrest much more recently—last year he was percussion section leader in the UW Husky band.

Forrest has been a huge hit with the students as they fine-tune their phenomenal drum line—students are arriving early before school and staying as late as they can to practice and learn more from him. And they're quick learners, too—there's the possibility of multiple musicians competing at the state level, with some having not picked up an instrument before this year.

Over 300 students are participating in general music and band programs across all grades this year, which has led to a new music teacher position at Chimacum Primary. Winter concerts and marching band performances returned, along with an overwhelmingly positive response and support from families and the community.

During the winter concert at the elementary school, Mitch asked the student audience how many of them play a musical instrument. Every single hand was raised. "I love how little kids totally commit to expressing themselves in music and it was so gratifying to see that they all consider themselves musicians," says Mitch.

More concerts and performances are already planned for this spring, like third and fourth graders performing a musical called "Every Day Is Earth Day" and fifth and sixth graders marching in the Port Townsend Rhody Festival Kiddies Parade.

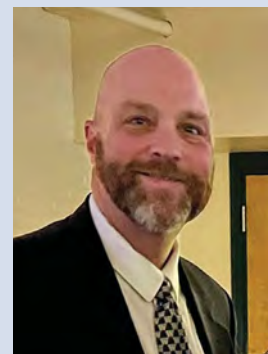
Mitch is also hoping to include Chimacum Band alumni in this year's graduation ceremony—email him at mitch_brennan@csd49.org if you are interested!



Behind the Program: Mitch Brennan

Mitch Brennan has been in education for over three decades, the last half of which has been at Chimacum. While this is his first year teaching music, he's a musician himself and is very passionate about what music education can bring to students' lives. Both of his children graduated from Chimacum and went on to play music at the University of Washington, following in their father's footsteps.

A graduate of the University of Washington, Western Washington University, and Walden University, Mitch was called to teaching after volunteering in the adult literacy program at Goodwill.



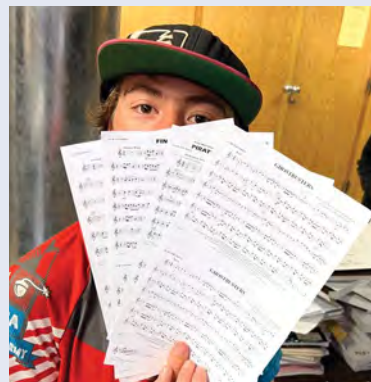
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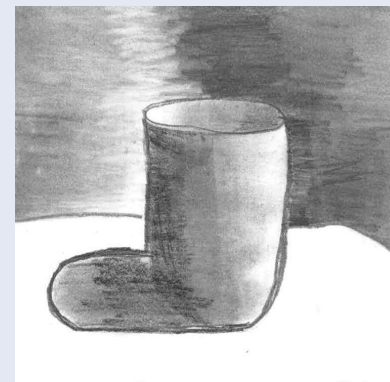
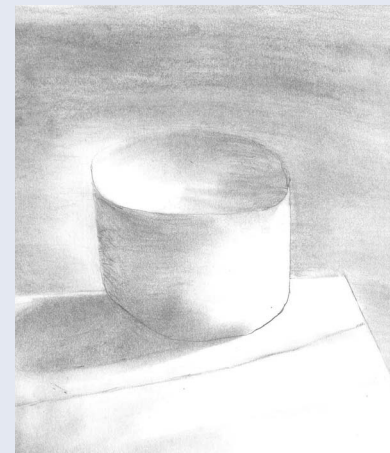
**BUILDING
STEAM**



ABOVE: CHS Marching Band, led by Mitch Brennan. BELOW L-R: Elementary students perform "Scare E Okee" at Halloween, junior high school band practice, a junior high student helps organize sheet music.



ABOVE: Primary students get creative when helping Art Specialist Matt Young with classroom clean-up. BELOW: Kindergarten students had fun creating shape monsters using a variety of materials.



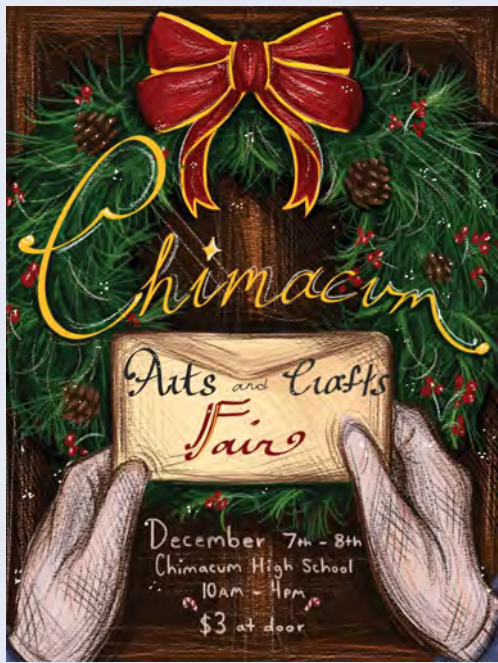
PRIMARY & ELEMENTARY ART



LEFT: Elementary students learn drawing concepts like shading during their classes with Art Specialist Matt Young. ABOVE: Students Aleana and Amelia show off their shaded vase drawings.



Cultivating CREATIVE THINKING with FINE ARTS EDUCATION



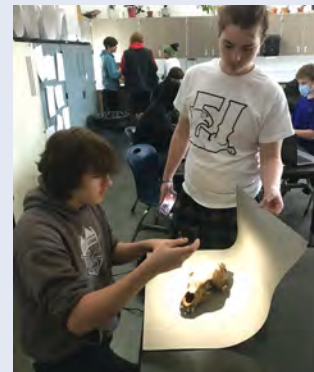
LEFT: High school students design seed packets in partnership with the Community Seed Project, then assist with the packaging of seeds once ready. ABOVE: Each year, students design posters to promote the Chimacum Arts and Crafts Fair around the community.



In Gary Coyan's class, students learn to show perspective in their drawings.



High School student Elliot Pflueger with his own self-portrait, the final project of first-semester art classes



A favorite project of first-semester art students is learning contour drawing from teacher Gary Coyan's animal skull collection





DEEP ROOTS BROAD HORIZONS

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**BUILDING
STEAM**

In Chimacum School District, our students are combining Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) to learn, explore and problem solve in creative and innovative ways. Follow all of our STEAM learning at www.csd49.org.



Forming connections through art exploration

Students at Chimacum Creek Primary and Chimacum Elementary are exploring the creative arts during their weekly art classes, thanks to Art Specialist Matt Young.

“My primary students love to make things and the joy is in the making for them,” says Young. A highlight for them has been using a variety of materials to create shape monsters, like the example shown by Gracie Powell (lower left).

Elementary students focus on basic drawing concepts and work within a variety of mediums to become more competent and confident artists. Young likes to compare teaching art to coaching—there will always be something unexpected and you can’t script art (or a game). Students practice and learn how they might handle certain situations, just like in athletics, so they know how to take charge and make creative decisions in the moment of creating their art.

Visual arts can also level out barriers to student learning, according to Young. “A student’s dyslexia or dyscalculia may hinder their reading and writing success, but not their artistic growth and development.”

Participating in the visual arts is more than just creating, though—it allows people of all ages to engage socially and emotionally, connect with others, and deal with their feelings in a healthy and productive way. It has been a lifeline for many during the pandemic as they found ways to combat loneliness and depression through creating.



ABOVE: Elementary students share their latest drawings with Art Specialist Matthew Young.

BELOW L-R: Kindergartener Gracie Powell's shape monster, elementary students practice shading cylinders in Young's classroom.