Dear Elementary School and Fifth Grade Families,

I am very pleased to introduce myself to you as your child’s music teacher. Just like last year, which was my first year teaching music at Big Rapids Public Schools, this school year promises to be an exciting adventure of getting to know everyone and exploring our world through the unique lens that is music.

If your child has not had music with me yet, you will probably find my philosophy of music education is different from what you may have experienced growing up. Students are constantly exploring creative movement, singing, performing, improvising, playing different instruments and games, learning about music from many different time periods and cultures, and having a ton of FUN!

If there is any personality trait of mine that I hope comes through strongly when I teach, it is to communicate to students that the world is an amazing place of variety that is intriguing to learn about, but it is also filled with human beings, who are, at base, the same. While we might express ourselves artistically in different languages or on different instruments or with different movements, fundamentally, we are simply using music as a human mode of expression. The fun part is understanding the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the music.

That being said, I do have a few expectations of my students that help to keep music class a fun and safe environment:

1. Make good choices.
2. Use kind words and good manners.
3. Show respect for the teacher, classmates, and the music.
4. Involve yourself.
5. Care for the instruments and other materials.

We only have music once a week so the better that students understand and put these actions into practice, the more we can learn and do in class! We will of course be discussing and practicing these things in music class, but it would be great to have your support as parents/guardians if you could review these expectations and discuss what they mean with your child.

You might notice that I am typically moving pretty quickly around the school because I split my time teaching between Riverview, Brookside, and the Middle School. However, there is always time to chat with parents. If you have any questions whatsoever, please feel free to email me at jlamar@brps.org.

I will also keep in contact with you throughout the year to update you on performance/concert dates and other happenings in music class. Thank you for your support of our music program. I look forward to an exciting year with you and your family!

Best regards,

Jeanna Lamar
Big Rapids Public Schools
Elementary/5th Grade Music Teacher