
[STAFF] Fwd: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] FFRF Letter Regarding Multiple Constitutional Violations

timothy.braker@mcusd709.org Braker, Timothy

Monday, February 26, 2024 at 11:17:20AM Central Standard Time

To: diane.krall@mcusd709.org Krall, Diane, andrew.roth@mcusd709.org Andrew Roth, david.cross@mcusd709.org David Cross, amanda.leman@mcusd709.org Amanda Leman, thomas.neeley@mcusd709.org Thomas Neeley, jerry.rudd@mcusd709.org Jerry Rudd, craig.smock@mcusd709.org Craig Smock

Good Morning

I am forwarding the email that Bryan & Heather referenced at the last meeting. Craig and Jay are working on a response.

Thanks for all you do

tim

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Matt Langer** <mlanger@ffrf.org>

Date: Fri, Feb 16, 2024 at 5:11 PM

Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] FFRF Letter Regarding Multiple Constitutional Violations

To: <craig.smock@mcusd709.org>, <timothy.braker@mcusd709.org>

Cc: Kat Grant <kgrant@ffrf.org>

Dear Superintendent Smock and President Baker:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a nationwide nonprofit organization that works to protect the constitutional principle of separation of state and church. Please review the attached letter from Legal Fellow Kat Grant (CC'ed). This letter was also sent via U.S. Mail.

We look forward to your response. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Matt Langer
Legal Assistant
Freedom from Religion Foundation
P.O. Box 750
Madison, WI 53701-0750

Attachments:

Morton CUSD 709, IL - Multiple Violations.pdf 482k

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

P. O. BOX 750 · MADISON, WI 53701 · (608) 256-8900 · WWW.FFRF.ORG

February 16, 2024

**SENT VIA EMAIL & U.S. MAIL: craig.smock@mcusd709.org;
timothy.braker@mcusd709.org**

Superintendent Craig Smock
Morton CUSD 709
1050 S Fourth Ave #200
Morton, IL 61550

Tim Braker
Board President
Morton CUSD 709 Board of Education
1050 S Fourth Ave #200
Morton, IL 61550

Re: Multiple constitutional violations

Dear Superintendent Smock and President Baker:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) regarding multiple constitutional violations in Morton CUSD 709 (the District) and at Morton CUSD 709 Board of Education meetings. FFRF is a national nonprofit organization with more than 40,000 members across the country, including over 1,200 members and a local chapter in Illinois. Our purposes are to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism.

A concerned Morton CUSD community member has contacted FFRF to report a significant number of constitutional violations occurring within the District.

We write to demand that the District and Board immediately cease violating the First Amendment out of respect for the Constitution and the rights of students and community members. Public schools may not show favoritism towards or coerce belief or participation in religion. *Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290 (2000); *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992); *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38 (1985); *Epperson v. Arkansas*, 393 U.S. 97 (1967); *Sch. Dist. of Abington Twp. v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963); *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962); *McCullum v Bd. of Ed.*, 333 U.S. 203 (1948).

Bible Study Promotion

It is our understanding that a Wednesday Bible Study is prominently advertised within the elementary school, including a sign up table at the annual open house, and promotion in the elementary school's newsletter. It is also our information that one of the leaders is a current school board member.

Students and their families have the First Amendment right to be free from religious indoctrination in their public schools, including when participating in school-sponsored activities

like open houses or accessing official school communications. It is highly inappropriate for the school to advertise a religious organization in such a way, much less allow a school board member to utilize her influence to engage in unconstitutional religious promotion.

Principal Saunders

It is also understanding that Grundy Elementary School Principal Michael Saunders has repeatedly abused his position in order to engage in unconstitutional and inappropriate religious promotion. Alleged violations include:

- 1) The display of the Ten Commandments in his office. It is our information that Superintendent Smock is aware of this, and agrees that it is inappropriate to display in a public school setting, though we do not know if the display has yet been removed. Please see attached.

Courts have continually held that school districts may not display religious messages or iconography in public schools. *See, e.g., Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39 (1980) (ruling that the Ten Commandments may not be displayed on classroom walls); *Lee v. York County*, 484 F.3d 689 (4th Cir. 2007) (ruling that a teacher may be barred from displaying religious messages on classroom bulletin boards); *Washegesic v. Bloomingdale Pub. Schs.*, 33 F.3d 679 (6th Cir. 1994) (ruling that a painting of Jesus may not be displayed in a public school).

- 2) Telling multiple students and families whom he perceives to be a part of the LGBTQIA+ community that being gay is a sin and that gay people are going to hell.

“It is beyond dispute that, at a minimum, the Constitution guarantees that government may not coerce anyone to support or participate in religion or its exercise.” *Lee v. Weissman*, at 587. When a school administrator tells certain students that they are going to hell, that administrator violates students’ First Amendment rights. Mr. Saunders’ actions have undeniably crossed the constitutional line.

The District has an obligation to ensure that its employees are not using their positions to indoctrinate students. Certainly, “a school can direct a teacher to ‘refrain from expressions of religious viewpoints in the classroom and like settings.’” *Helland v. S. Bend Comm. Sch. Corp.*, 93 F.3d 327 (7th Cir. 1993) (quoting *Bishop v. Arnov*, 926 F.2d 1066, 1077 (11th Cir. 1991)). The Supreme Court has recognized that “[f]amilies entrust public schools with the education of their children, but condition their trust on the understanding that the classroom will not purposely be used to advance religious views that may conflict with the private beliefs of the student and his or her family.” *Edwards v. Aguillard*, 482 U.S. 578, 584 (1987). Parents have the Constitutional right to determine their children’s religious or non religious upbringing. Here, Mr. Saunders has violated the trust that our complainant and all other parents place in Morton CUSD 709’s teachers to follow the Constitution and refrain from imposing their own religious beliefs on the children they are responsible for.

- 3) Allowing Bible quotes to be used to bully kids perceived as non-christian or LGBTQ+ allies, and restricting students from wearing clothing that expresses pro-LGBTQIA+ messaging. This actively creates a hostile, anti-LGBTQIA+ environment for students, in violation of their civil rights, and Morton CUSD 709's own anti-bullying policy.¹

Students may not be restricted from wearing clothing on the basis of an administrator's religious beliefs. It is also no defense to claim that the community is uncomfortable with LGBTQIA+ identities. Community feelings do not give the government the right to "prescribe what shall be orthodox in . . . religion, or other matters of opinion . . ." *W. V. State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624, 633–34 (1943) (Murphy, J., concurring). "The very purpose of a Bill of Rights was to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the reach of majorities and officials and to establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts." *Barnette*, 319 U.S. at 638. Put another way, "fundamental rights may not be submitted to vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections." *Id.* The First Amendment does not permit public schools to censor student expression just because that expression relates to a disfavored minority group.

- 4) Giving a slide presentation at a school assembly entitled "Pillars of Character" in which Saunders exclusively used images of Christian churches with physical pillars supporting part of the structures. The presentation did not include photographs of mosques, synagogues, or temples.

This clearly communicated to students that "character" and "Christianity" were the same thing. It is unconstitutional to take away instructional time from students to engage in religious indoctrination that teaches that only Christians are capable of being good and moral people.

It is also our understanding that a recent FOIA request uncovered tens of thousands of Christian nationalist and other extremist group emails in Principal Saunders' official school email account, in direct violation of Illinois law, the Illinois Educator Code of Ethics, and District Policy.²

Religious Testing For Academic Credit

We also have received reports that students at Grundy Elementary School are being tested on their knowledge of a conservative interpretation of the Christian Bible, and being given academic credit for their performance. It is also our understanding that the scores from this testing are

¹<https://www.morton709.org/file/1106/Morton%20School%20District%20Bullying%20Policy.pdf#:~:text=No%20student%20shall%20be%20retaliated,be%20subject%20to%20appropriate%20discipline.>

² Bonnie Kurowski, *Thousands of anti-LGBTQ emails found in Morton school principal's work email account*, Illinois Eagle (Aug. 2023) <https://illinoiseagle.com/2023/08/25/thousands-of-anti-lgbtq-emails-found-in-morton-school-principals-work-email-account/>.

shared with the classes, so that students can publicly see who is or is not a “good Christian,” creating a divisive atmosphere that shames students who are from non-Christian families.

Please note that it is not a violation of the free speech rights of teachers when a school district regulates what they teach to students while acting in their official capacities. Teachers have access to a captive audience of students due to their position as public educators. Therefore, the District has a duty to regulate religious proselytizing in its schools. “Because the speech at issue owes its existence to [his] position as a teacher, [the School District] acted well within constitutional limits in ordering [the teacher] not to speak in a manner it did not desire.” *Johnson v. Poway Unified Sch. Dist.*, 658 F.3d 954, 970 (9th Cir. 2011), *cert. denied*, 132 S. Ct. 1807 (2012) (upholding decision of school board to require a math teacher to remove two banners with historical quotes referencing “God”); *see also Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 547 U.S. 410, 421 (2006) (“We hold that when public employees make statements pursuant to their official duties, the employees are not speaking as citizens for First Amendment purposes, and the Constitution does not insulate their communications from employer discipline.”). Courts have upheld the termination of teachers who violate the principle of separation between church and state. *See, e.g., Grossman v. S. Shore Pub. Sch. Dist.*, 507 F.3d 1097 (7th Cir. 2007) (upholding termination of guidance counselor who prayed with students).

Prayer At School Board Meetings

It is our further understanding that school board meetings have been consistently opened with exclusively Christian prayer, led by pastors invited to give the prayer after the opening gavel.

The Supreme Court has consistently struck down prayers offered at school-sponsored events. *See, e.g., Santa Fe* (striking down school-sponsored prayers at football games); *Lee v. Weisman* (finding prayers at public high school graduations an impermissible establishment of religion); *Wallace* (overturning law requiring daily “period of silence not to exceed one minute . . . for meditation or daily prayer”); *Abington* (declaring school-sponsored devotional Bible reading and recitation of the Lord’s Prayer unconstitutional); *Engel* (holding formal recitation of prayers in public schools unconstitutional). In each of these cases, the Supreme Court struck down school-sponsored prayer because it constitutes government favoritism towards religion, which violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The Court’s recent decision in *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* did not alter the law regarding these kinds of coercive prayer practices, nor did it overrule these previous decisions.

In the most recent case striking down a school board’s prayer practice, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reaffirmed that Establishment Clause concerns are heightened in the context of public schools “because children and adolescents are just beginning to develop their own belief systems, and because they absorb the lessons of adults as to what beliefs are appropriate or right.” *FFRF v. Chino Valley Unified Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, 896 F.3d 1132, 1137 (9th Cir. 2018). The court reasoned that prayer at school board meetings “implicates the concerns with mimicry and coercive pressure that have led us to ‘be [] particularly vigilant in monitoring compliance with the Establishment Clause.’” *Id.* at 1146 (quoting *Edwards v. Aguillard*, 482 U.S. 578, 583–84 (1987)). The Court reaffirmed in *Kennedy* that the schools cannot ““make a

religious observance compulsory.” *Kennedy v. Bremerton Sch. Dist.*, 142 S. Ct. 2407, 2429 (2022) (quoting *Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U. S. 306, 314 (1952)).

Students and parents have the right—and often reason—to participate in school board meetings. It is coercive, insensitive, and intimidating to force nonreligious citizens to choose between making a public showing of their nonbelief by refusing to participate in the prayer or else display deference toward a religious sentiment in which they do not believe, but which their school board members clearly do. Board members are free to pray privately or to worship on their own time in their own way. However, the Board ought not to lend its power and prestige to religion or coerce attendees into participating in religious exercise.

Adult Involvement in See You At the Pole Event

Our complainant also noted that the District holds a See You At the Pole Event, and that Principal Saunders and other school board members actively participate in the event.

Any religious events must be entirely student-initiated and student-run. While the District cannot prohibit students from organizing or participating in a prayer event, the Supreme Court has stated that public school staff members and outside adults must refrain from participating in the religious activities of students while acting within their governmental roles. *See Bd. of Educ. of the Westside Cmty. Sch. v. Mergens*, 496 U.S. 226, 253 (1990) (“Under the [Equal Access] Act . . . faculty monitors may not participate in any religious meetings, and nonschool persons may not direct, control or regularly attend activities of student groups.” (citing 20 U.S.C. §§ 4071(c)(3) and (5))).

See You at the Pole’s official website recognizes that adults should not be involved in their events:

See You at the Pole™ is a student-led event. Strong student leadership is crucial. Adult volunteers and parents should not lead the See You at the Pole™ gathering. Many well-meaning adults take over and take away from the students by trying to lead out in the prayers at the flagpole. This is not the intention for See You at the Pole™, nor is it legal for adults to lead. Please step back or stay away and let the students grow and learn in their faith by leading.

The best place for an adult to pray on the day of See You at the Pole™ is not on campus with the students, but at alternate locations.³

Furthermore, it is inappropriate and needlessly divisive for the District to allow its staff or outside adults to promote, participate in, and organize See You At The Pole events. Staff involvement in SYATP, including congratulating students for attending, alienates and excludes non-Christian students, teachers, and parents whose religious beliefs are inconsistent with the message being promoted by the school staff.

³ *Adults*, See You at the Pole, <https://syatp.com/pages/adults>.

Baccalaureates

We have been further informed that the school district permits the annual Baccalaureate program to be held on school grounds. Our complainant has stated that the event organizers do not rent out the space, and that is a wholly Christian religious event for students in the school.

Baccalaureate ceremonies are religious services with prayer and worship. Schools may not promote or facilitate baccalaureate ceremonies. *See, e.g., Warnock v. Archer*, 443 F.3d 954 (8th Cir. 2006) (upholding injunction prohibiting school district from orchestrating or supervising prayers at school graduation or baccalaureate ceremonies).

When courts have permitted privately-sponsored baccalaureate services in public schools, the schools involved had taken significant steps to ensure there was no school affiliation with the baccalaureate ceremony. *See Randall v. Pagan*, 765 F. Supp. 793 (W.D.N.Y. 1991) (noting that “the school board has already formally and publicly dissociated itself from the baccalaureate service, has canceled its prior order for programs and has refused to lend any financial support, either direct or indirect, to assist the [religious group] in its sponsorship of the event.” In addition, no “district personnel are involved in any aspect of the service, either in their capacities as District employees or . . . in their personal, individual capacities.”); *Verbena Methodist Church v. Chilton Bd. of Educ.*, 765 F. Supp. 704 (M.D. Ala. 1991) (“The Board must also ensure that no other school officials promote, lead, or participate in the service.”).

The District must respect the constitutional rights of all its students to be free from religious coercion and indoctrination in their public schools. Thus, the District must refrain from promoting and facilitating this baccalaureate ceremony and any other religious activities or events in the future.

Religious Music Programming

Lastly, we have been informed that the District’s music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum.

In the context of music classes, public schools may teach religious music alongside secular music in order to achieve legitimate secular educational goals, such as giving students a better understanding of historical choral music. While there may be such instances where teaching religious songs in the public school context is permissible, schools should exercise caution when teaching impressionable students songs that are clearly devotional in nature. There is no dearth of secular, age-appropriate choral music for students to learn. Parents—not the school district or a public school music teacher—have the authority and the right to decide whether and when to expose their child to religious concepts and devotional music.

Conclusion

Each of the allegations outlined above demonstrate a clear pattern of the District privileging religion over non-religion, and a very specific interpretation of Christianity above all other faiths. Religion is a divisive force in public schools. The Supreme Court has repeatedly noted that “[s]chool sponsorship of a religious message is impermissible because it sends the ancillary message to members of the audience who are nonadherents ‘that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community.’” *Santa Fe*, at 309 (quoting *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668, 688 (1984) (O’Connor, J., concurring)). This message is particularly impermissible when it is presented to such young and impressionable students.

These actions and behaviors needlessly alienate those students, families, and teachers who are a part of the nearly thirty-seven percent of Americans who are non-Christians, and the nearly one in three Americans who now identify as religiously unaffiliated.⁴

FFRF takes these kinds of violations very seriously and we are willing to vigorously defend students' rights. We recently settled a lawsuit against a school district in West Virginia after it allowed a preacher to recruit students during the school day. *See Mays v. Cabell Cnty Bd. of Educ.*, No. 3:22-cv-00085 (S.D. W.Va., Filed Feb. 17, 2022). As part of that settlement, the district agreed to pay nearly \$175,000 in attorney fees.⁵

These constitutional violations must cease immediately, in order to protect the constitutional rights of *all* Morton CUSD 709 students and their families. Please respond in writing with the steps you are taking to remedy these issues, so that we may inform our complainant.

Sincerely,



Kat D. Grant

*Equal Justice Works Fellow (sponsored by the Wm. Collins Kohler Foundation)
Freedom From Religion Foundation*

Enclosure

⁴ Gregory A. Smith, *About Three-in-Ten U.S. Adults Are Now Religiously Unaffiliated*, Pew Research Center (Dec. 14, 2021), available at

www.pewforum.org/2021/12/14/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/.

⁵ ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/42958-ffrf-victory-w-va-families-secure-policy-changes-in-religious-revival-laws

Although I had not seen it myself, Mr. Saunders indicated that he did have a small plaque on the wall that included the Ten Commandments in his office near his desk as part of his personal effects. Although no one complained to him, he removed it last school year on his own. Had I seen it, I would have had him remove it as well.

Prominently posting the Ten Commandments in open view, such as in classrooms or hallways is not appropriate. Although Mr. Saunders' plaque was small and not prominently displayed, it is my opinion that it is still inadvisable to have that kind of plaque visible in a quasi-public space, like an office, when students, staff, and parents are sometimes present.

[STAFF] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Flyer at the high school

craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 12:07:28 PM Central Standard Time

To: ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com Ashley

Bcc: boardofeducation@mcusd709.org

Hello, Dr. Fischer,

There is no confusion on the part of the Youth Alive student organization nor the MHS administration. Any teacher or student that had any questions about the legitimacy of the group should have simply consulted the MHS administration. That apparently did not happen, because this could have been easily explained.

The Youth Alive club was approved through our normal process. Students completed the "MHS New Activity/Club Request" form on February 1st. It was approved by Mrs. Adolphson, and as you could see from the stamp on the picture of the poster, the MHS administration did approve the postings. They did, indeed, go through the same process as other student-led clubs. It is a very new club, and the name of the club has since been added to the MHS website.

Whether or not there is a national affiliate of the organization, or whether the organization is politically active or not, has no bearing on the approval process. Approval is simply based on whether a group of students want to meet in our school, and whether there is a willing staff member to supervise them. Students are free to exercise their rights of speech and ideology, provided that the group does not seek activity that is illegal or breaks school rules. Otherwise, the school administration is required to be neutral in terms of beliefs and purposes.

I am not sure who your sources are or why you are so concerned about the Youth Alive group or its purpose. I am reluctant to share the approval form with you as it contains the names of several students as well as the name of the staff supervisor. It is a legitimate student-led club that went through the same process as all other student-led groups, and their posters were obviously approved as well.

Sincerely,

Craig Smock

On Tue, Feb 20, 2024 at 5:26 PM Ashley <ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com> wrote:

So I think part of the confusion is definitely coming from the fact that Youth Alive is not listed as an official student organization on the morton activity and clubs website: <https://mhs.morton709.org/activitiesathletics/activities-and-clubs/category/clubs-and-activities> and is definitely a politically active national Christian organization.

This may just be a factor of timing, and that the club was only recently approved via the same application as the others and the website hasn't been updated yet. If that's the case, should be easy to prove they were an approved student organization before being allowed to advertise by providing me with a dated copy of their application, complete with their sponsors name. If they didn't have to go through the same club approval process as all the other clubs you mentioned, and were allowed to advertise without being an official student club, you can see where that would be discriminatory and showing preference to a religious group, and therefore not covered by the Equal Access Act. Looking forward to clearing this up! Thank you in advance for a copy of that application/school group approval!
-Ashley Fischer

On Feb 20, 2024, at 2:46 PM, Ashley <ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com> wrote:

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 2:13:02 PM Central Standard Time

To: ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com Ashley
Bcc: boardofeducation@mcusd709.org

Hello, Dr. Fischer,

I apologize for coming across as confrontational. Admittedly, I interpreted your request to see the actual form for yourself as an indication that you did not believe what I had just told you. But, you are right. Your request was not inappropriate. You are welcome to see the redacted form, and I have attached it to this email. If you still question its authenticity, I welcome you to continue your investigation by contacting Jamie Adolphson, Associate Principal of MHS, to verify the club's legitimacy and the timing of it. And, I regret that we had not updated our website in a more timely manner.

As a side note, most districts do not even list non-school-sanctioned clubs like we do at MHS. We not only list them on our website, but we even put their group pictures in our yearbook, if they wish.. From my experience in other districts, that is very atypical. But, I'm glad that we do it at MHS.

With regard to the environment at Morton HS, I cannot imagine an administration that is more open, inclusive, and understanding of diverse students and their needs than Mrs. Ripka and her assistants. Like you, we also want a safe and equitable school district, and it can be frustrating when you can not always control teenagers' behavior when it comes to respect in our hallways. But, we are working on it.

Certainly, we are a bunch of imperfect humans trying to run a district of 3000 little humans. So, we are going to make mistakes along the way. And when we do, we hope for some grace and forgiveness from others as we learn. I'm guessing that your experience in the medical field is likely very similar in that regard.

I have wished for several months that there could be a way that we could meet together in mutual respect and trust toward a common goal and a common understanding, without fears of merely heightening the animosity. I wish that possibility didn't seem so remote right now.

Again, please forgive my defensiveness and I was supporting my MHS administrative team. They did follow procedures correctly in this case.

As imperfect as we are, we do truly care about our district, our staff, and our students. And, I believe that you do as well.

I hope you have a great day.

Craig

On Wed, Feb 21, 2024 at 9:04 PM Ashley <ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Smock,

I don't believe anything in my request was inappropriate or deserving of the confrontational tone that seems to permeate most of your email replies to me. The application and approval of an official school organization is publicly

accessible knowledge, and under the same sensitive information regulations as many of the FOIAs you have been receiving. So I would obviously be complete happy with a redacted copy of the application with the student names censored.

Let's take a minute to be very frank; the students and the staff do not come to administration to ask these questions because you have made it wholly unsafe for them to do so. Why on earth would they instead choose to message me, a complete stranger to them, over their own administrators? Unless that same administration had created such a culture of retaliation that they genuinely fear for their safety and job security should they show any dissension? (Which is exactly the case here). It is YOUR job to make them comfortable coming to you, not my job to explain why they aren't. So instead of immediately becoming defensive, you could take this as an opportunity to recognize how you are failing at that, and hopefully decide to work on doing better for staff and students in the future.

I agree the presence of a national organization does not determine whether a school led group can exist; but my point was this fact, combined with the group not being listed on the website, makes it a very feasible assumption that the group may not be an official student group. If you saw planned parenthood youth group posters hung up tomorrow, would you find it so unreasonable to double check and make sure there is actually an approved student group behind that advertisement?

Once again, my request was not inappropriate, nor are community members concerns when it comes to how the school district handles matters of separation of religion and public educational institutions. The summary from the Freedom From Religion Foundation is a prime example of how poorly District 709 has self regulated this separation in the past, so a public desire to monitor the district when it comes to religious matters I think is completely reasonable and understandable.

Now having said all that, if Youth Alive is indeed an official school organization as of February 1, then I agree there were no violations in this case and I will pass that information along. But surely you realize there is nothing wrong in wanting to double check that.

As a parting thought, I hope you can eventually come to realize I, and those working towards a safer, more equitable school district, do not have to be an enemy. I often times think that the natural instinct of you, and many of the board members, to immediately turn defensive at any perceived questioning of your decisions or authority really restricts you from thinking critically on many of these emotionally charged topics, and limits your ability to recognize the potential you have to make a really positive difference in promoting acceptance and compassion in our community. I can actually be a very valuable asset, if you would just stop trying so hard to make me the enemy.

I appreciate the time you have taken to reply, as well as the time it will take you to redact the approval form. I look forward to continuing to work with you towards equality, acceptance, and kindness in our schools.

Respectfully,
Ashley Fischer, MD (she/her)

On Feb 21, 2024, at 12:07 PM, Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Hello, Dr. Fischer,

There is no confusion on the part of the Youth Alive student organization nor the MHS administration. Any teacher or student that had any questions about the legitimacy of the group should have simply consulted the MHS administration. That apparently did not happen, because this could have been easily explained.

The Youth Alive club was approved through our normal process. Students completed the "MHS New Activity/Club Request" form on February 1st. It was approved by Mrs. Adolphson, and as you could see from the stamp on the picture of the poster, the MHS administration did approve the postings. They did, indeed, go through the same process as other student-led clubs. It is a very new club, and the name of the club has since been added to the MHS website.

Whether or not there is a national affiliate of the organization, or whether the organization is politically active or not, has no bearing on the approval process. Approval is simply based on whether a group of students want to meet in our school, and whether there is a willing staff member to supervise them. Students are free to exercise their rights of speech and ideology, provided that the group does not seek activity that is illegal or breaks school rules. Otherwise, the school administration is required to be neutral in terms of beliefs and purposes.

I am not sure who your sources are or why you are so concerned about the Youth Alive group or its purpose. I am reluctant to share the approval form with you as it contains the names of several students as well as the name of the staff supervisor. It is a legitimate student-led club that went through the same process as all other student-led groups, and their posters were obviously approved as well.

Sincerely,

Craig Smock

On Tue, Feb 20, 2024 at 5:26 PM Ashley <ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com> wrote:

So I think part of the confusion is definitely coming from the fact that Youth Alive is not listed as an official student organization on the morton activity and clubs website: <https://mhs.morton709.org/activitiesathletics/activities-and-clubs/category/clubs-and-activities> and is definitely a politically active national Christian organization.

This may just be a factor of timing, and that the club was only recently approved via the same application as the others and the website hasn't been updated yet. If that's the case, should be easy to prove they were an approved student organization before being allowed to advertise by providing me with a dated copy of their application, complete with their sponsors name. If they didn't have to go through the same club approval process as all the other clubs you mentioned, and were allowed to advertise without being an official student club, you can see where that would be discriminatory and showing preference to a religious group, and therefore not covered by the Equal Access Act. Looking forward to clearing this up! Thank you in advance for a copy of that application/school group approval!
-Ashley Fischer

On Feb 20, 2024, at 2:46 PM, Ashley <ashleyfischerforschoolboard@gmail.com> wrote:

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



This is a staff email account managed by Morton Community Unit School District 709. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



Attachments:

Youth Alive Form- Redacted.pdf 45k

MHS New Activity/Club Request

Date: *

MM DD YYYY

02 / 01 / 2024

Advisor Name(Teacher): *

[REDACTED]

Student Requestor(s) Name(s) *

[REDACTED]

Name of Proposed Club: *

Youth Alive

General description and/or purpose of the proposed club. *

Our club's purpose is to give an opportunity in the afternoon for kids who are curious about starting a relationship with Jesus, how to grow in your faith and understand how to live your life for Jesus.

Goal(s) & activities of proposed club: *

To be an additional opportunity for kids to join a Christian led club, we will be doing games as well as open faith related discussions that can help answer questions about Christianity.

When and how often do you intend to meet? *

We intend to meet once every other week to start, and then maybe switch to every week Wednesday afternoons at 3:15.

Why do you think there is an interest in this proposed club? *

Some kids don't have the time in the mornings to participate in FCA as well as we think we could focus more on forming a relationship with God and not just furthering a relationship that already exists .

Is the proposed club affiliated with any other organization? (i.e., national, county, etc.) *

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate organization:

Youth Alive

Does this club plan to engage in fundraising? *

Yes

No

Other: _____

This form was created inside of Morton Unit District 709.

Google Forms

[STAFF] FFRF

craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 12:09:10 PM Central Standard Time

To: SHANE.ROCKE@mcusd709.org Shane Rocke, TIMOTHY.BEUTEL@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy, heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Melissa Risner
Cc: jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 12:22:34 PM Central Standard Time

To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig
Cc: SHANE.ROCKE@mcusd709.org Shane Rocke, heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Melissa Risner, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
Mary Had a Little Lamb
Take Me Out to the Ballgame
Are You Sleeping
This Land is Your Land
Coming Around the Mountain
The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
Here We Come A-Wassailing
Do You Hear What I Hear?
Sleigh Ride
Christmas Time Is Here
Ding Dong Merrily on High
Frosty the Snowman
Jingle Bells
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Joy to the World
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
Au Claire De La Lune
Go To Sleep
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Cha Cha Cha!
Old MacDonald
Pirates of the Caribbean
William Tell Overture
Let's Get Started
Hey Mr. Beat Boy
Makin' It Up
Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
We Will Rock You
Putin' on the Ritz
Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
Feliz Navidad
The Man With the Bag
Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields

Dies Irae

Love is an Open Door

Basin Street Blues

Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water

Nowhere to Go But Up

Let My People Go

For Good

Blue Skies

Thanks

Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 12:59:33 PM Central Standard Time

To: timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy

Cc: SHANE.ROCKE@mcusd709.org Shane Rocke, heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Melissa Risner, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Thanks, Tim!

I like the way you formatted the list!

Craig

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Mary Had a Little Lamb

Take Me Out to the Ballgame

Are You Sleeping

This Land is Your Land

Coming Around the Mountain

The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy

Here We Come A-Wassailing

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Sleigh Ride

Christmas Time Is Here

Ding Dong Merrily on High

Frosty the Snowman

Jingle Bells

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

Joy to the World

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns

Au Claire De La Lune

Go To Sleep

Go Tell Aunt Rhody

Cha Cha Cha!

Old MacDonald

Pirates of the Carribean

William Tell Overture
Let's Get Started
Hey Mr. Beat Boy
Makin' It Up
Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
We Will Rock You
Putin' on the Ritz
Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
Feliz Navidad
The Man With the Bag
Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields
Dies Irae
Love is an Open Door
Basin Street Blues
Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water
Nowhere to Go But Up
Let My People Go
For Good
Blue Skies

Thanks
Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



shane.rocke@mcusd709.org **Rocke, Shane**

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 1:07:50 PM Central Standard Time

To: timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy
Cc: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig, heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Melissa Risner, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Below is Lincoln general music programs, Morton Elementary Choir, and PB&J repertoire for 2023-2024 school year

Lincoln Elementary School:

- Kindergarten Program:
- Jolly Old St. Nicholas
- Up on the Housetop
- I'm a Little Snowman
- Tapping, Tapping Little Elf
- Santa is His Name-o
- 5 Candy Canes
- I saw Three Ships
- We Wish You a Merry Christmas
- Silent Night

1st Grade Program:

Here we come a-Wassailing
The Holly and the Ivy (first verse)
Good King Wenceslas (first two verses)
Deck the Hall
Ding Dong Merrily on High
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

2nd Grade Program:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
Jingle Bell Rock
It's Beginning to Look like Christmas
I'll be Home for Christmas
Frosty the Snowman
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3rd Grade Program:

Somewhere in my Memory (from Home Alone)
Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
Christmas Time is Here
Silver Bells
Who Would Imagine a King (from The Preacher's Wife)
Welcome Christmas (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas)
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

4th Grade Program (songs played on recorders, no lyrics):

Au Claire de la Lune
Go to Sleep
Softly Falls the Rain
March of the Recorders
Hot Cross Buns
Pizza Polka
Jingle Bells
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Austrian Folk Song
French Folk Tune
Rockin' Recorders
Pretty Rainbows
Miss Macie
Old MacDonald
Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

5th Grade Program (songs played on choir chimes, no lyrics):

Theme from Surprise Symphony
Londonderry Air
Chorale (from Pictures at an Exhibition)
Shenandoah
Amazing Grace
Two Fanfares for Bells
Largo (from New World Symphony)
Simple Gifts
Chopsticks

6th Grade Musical:

Forever Onward Go
Catching Up with the Princesses (parts 1,2, & 3)
Misunderstood
But We Love Them, Even So
Beanstalking
Sorry

Bros.
Forever Onward Go, Reprise

Morton Elementary Choir:
The Sorcerer's Hall
Humpty Dumpty
Hey! Ho! Nobody Home!
You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch
Castle on a Cloud
The Brook
Accentuate the Positive
The Fox
The Lonely Goatherd
Drive My Car

PB&J:
Santa Claus is Comin' to Town
Somewhere Out There
Linus & Lucy
Fly Like an Eagle
Can't Buy Me Love (medley)
Home

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
Mary Had a Little Lamb
Take Me Out to the Ballgame
Are You Sleeping
This Land is Your Land
Coming Around the Mountain
The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
Here We Come A-Wassailing
Do You Hear What I Hear?
Sleigh Ride
Christmas Time Is Here
Ding Dong Merrily on High
Frosty the Snowman
Jingle Bells
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Joy to the World
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
 Au Claire De La Lune
 Go To Sleep
 Go Tell Aunt Rhody
 Cha Cha Cha!
 Old MacDonald
 Pirates of the Carribean
 William Tell Overture
 Let's Get Started
 Hey Mr. Beat Boy
 Makin' It Up
 Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
 We Will Rock You
 Putin' on the Ritz
 Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
 Feliz Navidad
 The Man With the Bag
 Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields
 Dies Irae
 Love is an Open Door
 Basin Street Blues
 Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water
 Nowhere to Go But Up
 Let My People Go
 For Good
 Blue Skies

Thanks
 Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 1:14:19 PM Central Standard Time

To: shane.rocke@mcusd709.org Rocke, Shane

Cc: timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy, heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Melissa Risner, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Perfect. Thanks, Shane!

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:08 PM Rocke, Shane <shane.rocke@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Below is Lincoln general music programs, Morton Elementary Choir, and PB&J repertoire for 2023-2024 school year

Lincoln Elementary School:

Kindergarten Program:

Jolly Old St. Nicholas

Up on the Housetop

I'm a Little Snowman

Tapping, Tapping Little Elf

Santa is His Name-o

5 Candy Canes

I saw Three Ships

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

1st Grade Program:

Here we come a-Wassailing

The Holly and the Ivy (first verse)

Good King Wenceslas (first two verses)

Deck the Hall

Ding Dong Merrily on High

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

2nd Grade Program:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
Jingle Bell Rock
It's Beginning to Look like Christmas
I'll be Home for Christmas
Frosty the Snowman
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3rd Grade Program:

Somewhere in my Memory (from Home Alone)
Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
Christmas Time is Here
Silver Bells
Who Would Imagine a King (from The Preacher's Wife)
Welcome Christmas (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas)
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

4th Grade Program (songs played on recorders, no lyrics):

Au Claire de la Lune
Go to Sleep
Softly Falls the Rain
March of the Recorders
Hot Cross Buns
Pizza Polka
Jingle Bells
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Austrian Folk Song
French Folk Tune
Rockin' Recorders
Pretty Rainbows
Miss Macie
Old MacDonald
Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

5th Grade Program (songs played on choir chimes, no lyrics):

Theme from Surprise Symphony
Londonderry Air
Chorale (from Pictures at an Exhibition)
Shenandoah
Amazing Grace
Two Fanfares for Bells
Largo (from New World Symphony)
Simple Gifts
Chopsticks

6th Grade Musical:

Forever Onward Go
Catching Up with the Princesses (parts 1,2, & 3)
Misunderstood
But We Love Them, Even So
Beanstalking
Sorry
Bros.
Forever Onward Go, Reprise

Morton Elementary Choir:

The Sorcerer's Hall
Humpty Dumpty
Hey! Ho! Nobody Home!
You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch
Castle on a Cloud

The Brook
 Accentuate the Positive
 The Fox
 The Lonely Goatherd
 Drive My Car

PB&J:

Santa Claus is Comin' to Town
 Somewhere Out There
 Linus & Lucy
 Fly Like an Eagle
 Can't Buy Me Love (medley)
 Home

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:*5/6 Program:*

Skip to My Lou
 Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
 Mary Had a Little Lamb
 Take Me Out to the Ballgame
 Are You Sleeping
 This Land is Your Land
 Coming Around the Mountain
 The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
 Here We Come A-Wassailing
 Do You Hear What I Hear?
 Sleigh Ride
 Christmas Time Is Here
 Ding Dong Merrily on High
 Frosty the Snowman
 Jingle Bells
 Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
 Joy to the World
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
 Au Claire De La Lune
 Go To Sleep
 Go Tell Aunt Rhody
 Cha Cha Cha!
 Old MacDonald
 Pirates of the Carribean
 William Tell Overture
 Let's Get Started
 Hey Mr. Beat Boy

Makin' It Up
Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:
Pure Imagination
We Will Rock You
Putin' on the Ritz
Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:
Fun, Fun, Fun
Feliz Navidad
The Man With the Bag
Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:
Flanders Fields
Dies Irae
Love is an Open Door
Basin Street Blues
Moon River

Final Concert:
Bridge Over Troubled Water
Nowhere to Go But Up
Let My People Go
For Good
Blue Skies

Thanks
Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



heather.berger@mcusd709.org Berger, Heather

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 1:49:35 PM Central Standard Time

To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig
Cc: shane.rocke@mcusd709.org Rocke, Shane, timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy,
melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Melissa Risner, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org
Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Here is the list of music for Jefferson and the high school:

Jefferson Elementary

3rd & 4th program:

- I Love the Autumn
- Pumpkin Spice
- I Want Some Pumpkin Pie
- Hot Cross Buns
- Au Clair de la Lune
- Rolling Merrily
- Lightly Row
- Whacky Cow Town
- Ebeneezer Sneezzer
- Ready for Tomorrow
- Softly Falls the Rain
- Rockin' Along
- Excerpt from Symphony No.9 by Beethoven
- Gratitude

Kindergarten:

Crunchy Leaves
 I Want to Go Outside
 Better Bundle Up
 Snowman, Where'd You Go?
 Winter Wiggles
 Reindeer Parade
 Christmas Medley (Jingle Bells, Up on the Housetop, We Wish You a Merry Christmas)

1st & 2nd Grade:

A Bear-y Merry Holiday (Hal Leonard Publishing)

A Bear-y Merry Holiday
 Dancing on Ice
 Jingle Bears
 Covered in White
 Panda-monium
 Reprise: Bear-y Merry Holiday

5th & 6th Grade:

Dig It (Hal Leonard Publishing)

So Long Ago
 The Land Between Two Rivers
 In My Tomb
 Empires of the East
 Greece Is the Word
 Toga Party Tonight
 Here's to the Future
 Reprise: So Long Ago

MHS Concert Music

Fall Concert:

Psallite
 Star in the East
 Bagels and Biscuits
 Sweet and Lovely
 Route 66
 Over the Rainbow
 It's a Good Day
 Howdidow Deediddlumday
 What Would I Do Without My Music?
 I Put a Spell on You

Winter Concert:

And All the Town Be Merry
 Season of Light
 Carol of the Bells
 Mary Sat A-Rockin'
 Mele Kalikimaka
 It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
 Holly Jolly Christmas
 Little Jack Frost, Get Lost
 Snow from *Three Japanese Poems*
 Do A Little Good

MHS Madrigals

And All the Town Be Merry
 Bagels and Biscuits
 The Blessing
 Blessing in the Leaving
 The Boar's Head Carol
 Carol of the Bells
 Cool Moon
 A Great and Mighty Wonder
 Paul and His Chickens
 People Look East
 Psallite
 Season of Light
 A Shoot Shall Come Forth
 Silent Night
 Sing We Now of Christmas
 Sing We and Chant It
 Star in the East
 The Twelve Days After Christmas
 The Twelve Days of Christmas
 Wassail
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 When Allen-A-Dale Went A-Hunting
 With Gladness, Cheer and Song
 The Star-Spangled Banner

Mid-Illini Choir Concert:

Snow from *Three Japanese Poems*
 Steady My Trembulin' Soul

May Concert:

Steady My Trembulin' Soul

Something to Talk About
A Million Dreams
Thank You for the Music
Come What May
Other pieces TBD

Thank you very much for your support!

Heather

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:14 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Perfect. Thanks, Shane!

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:08 PM Roche, Shane <shane.roche@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Below is Lincoln general music programs, Morton Elementary Choir, and PB&J repertoire for 2023-2024 school year

Lincoln Elementary School:

Kindergarten Program:

Jolly Old St. Nicholas
Up on the Housetop
I'm a Little Snowman
Tapping, Tapping Little Elf
Santa is His Name-o
5 Candy Canes
I saw Three Ships
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

1st Grade Program:

Here we come a-Wassailing
The Holly and the Ivy (first verse)
Good King Wenceslas (first two verses)
Deck the Hall
Ding Dong Merrily on High
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

2nd Grade Program:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
Jingle Bell Rock
It's Beginning to Look like Christmas
I'll be Home for Christmas
Frosty the Snowman
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3rd Grade Program:

Somewhere in my Memory (from Home Alone)
Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
Christmas Time is Here
Silver Bells
Who Would Imagine a King (from The Preacher's Wife)
Welcome Christmas (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas)
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

4th Grade Program (songs played on recorders, no lyrics):

Au Claire de la Lune
Go to Sleep
Softly Falls the Rain
March of the Recorders
Hot Cross Buns

Pizza Polka
 Jingle Bells
 Go Tell Aunt Rhody
 Austrian Folk Song
 French Folk Tune
 Rockin' Recorders
 Pretty Rainbows
 Miss Macie
 Old MacDonald
 Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

5th Grade Program (songs played on choir chimes, no lyrics):
 Theme from Surprise Symphony
 Londonderry Air
 Chorale (from Pictures at an Exhibition)
 Shenandoah
 Amazing Grace
 Two Fanfares for Bells
 Largo (from New World Symphony)
 Simple Gifts
 Chopsticks

6th Grade Musical:
 Forever Onward Go
 Catching Up with the Princesses (parts 1,2, & 3)
 Misunderstood
 But We Love Them, Even So
 Beanstalking
 Sorry
 Bros.
 Forever Onward Go, Reprise

Morton Elementary Choir:
 The Sorcerer's Hall
 Humpty Dumpty
 Hey! Ho! Nobody Home!
 You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch
 Castle on a Cloud
 The Brook
 Accentuate the Positive
 The Fox
 The Lonely Goatherd
 Drive My Car

PB&J:
 Santa Claus is Comin' to Town
 Somewhere Out There
 Linus & Lucy
 Fly Like an Eagle
 Can't Buy Me Love (medley)
 Home

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
Mary Had a Little Lamb
Take Me Out to the Ballgame
Are You Sleeping
This Land is Your Land
Coming Around the Mountain
The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
Here We Come A-Wassailing
Do You Hear What I Hear?
Sleigh Ride
Christmas Time Is Here
Ding Dong Merrily on High
Frosty the Snowman
Jingle Bells
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Joy to the World
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
Au Claire De La Lune
Go To Sleep
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Cha Cha Cha!
Old MacDonald
Pirates of the Caribbean
William Tell Overture
Let's Get Started
Hey Mr. Beat Boy
Makin' It Up
Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
We Will Rock You
Putin' on the Ritz
Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
Feliz Navidad
The Man With the Bag
Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields
Dies Irae
Love is an Open Door
Basin Street Blues
Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water
Nowhere to Go But Up
Let My People Go
For Good
Blue Skies

Thanks
Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
 Superintendent
 Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--
 Heather Berger

Morton CUSD 709 Vocal & General Music
 (309) 266-7182 Ext. 6146
 Morton High School
 Jefferson Elementary
 Morton Junior High

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 2:04:28 PM Central Standard Time

melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Risner, Melissa

To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig
 Cc: shane.rocke@mcusd709.org Rocke, Shane, timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy,
 heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org
 Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Lettie Brown's general music programs 2023-2024 school year:

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year"
 "It's Beginning to Look Like Christmas"
 "Christmas Island"
 "The Polar Express Medley"
 "Holly, Jolly Christmas"
 "White Christmas"
 "Somewhere In My Memory"
 "Jingle Bells"
 "Up on the Housetop"
 "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth"
 "I Want A Hippopotamus for Christmas"
 "Melekaliki Maka"
 "Nuttin' for Christmas"
 "The Chipmunk Song"
 "Silver and Gold"
 "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer"
 "We Wish You A Merry Christmas"

"Hot Cross Buns"
 "A Claire de la Lune"
 "Rolling Merrily"
 "Go to Sleep"
 "Excerpt from Symphony #7" - Beethoven
 "Teamwork, Our First Duet"
 "Softly Falls the Rain"
 "Latin Satin"
 "March of the Recorders"
 "Rockin' Along"
 "Pizza Polka"

5th Grade Musical: "The Castaways" a 1990s musical which has been discontinued and out of print.

"The Castaways"

"The Shoe Shine Song"

"The Milky Way"

"Little Child"

"Choose Me"

"Trickster's Tune"

"Home Within Our Hearts"

Melissa 😊

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:14 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Perfect. Thanks, Shane!

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:08 PM Rocke, Shane <shane.rocke@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Below is Lincoln general music programs, Morton Elementary Choir, and PB&J repertoire for 2023-2024 school year

Lincoln Elementary School:

Kindergarten Program:

Jolly Old St. Nicholas

Up on the Housetop

I'm a Little Snowman

Tapping, Tapping Little Elf

Santa is His Name-o

5 Candy Canes

I saw Three Ships

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

1st Grade Program:

Here we come a-Wassailing

The Holly and the Ivy (first verse)

Good King Wenceslas (first two verses)

Deck the Hall

Ding Dong Merrily on High

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

2nd Grade Program:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Jingle Bell Rock

It's Beginning to Look like Christmas

I'll be Home for Christmas

Frosty the Snowman

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

3rd Grade Program:

Somewhere in my Memory (from Home Alone)

Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree

Christmas Time is Here

Silver Bells

Who Would Imagine a King (from The Preacher's Wife)

Welcome Christmas (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas)

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Silent Night

4th Grade Program (songs played on recorders, no lyrics):

Au Claire de la Lune
 Go to Sleep
 Softly Falls the Rain
 March of the Recorders
 Hot Cross Buns
 Pizza Polka
 Jingle Bells
 Go Tell Aunt Rhody
 Austrian Folk Song
 French Folk Tune
 Rockin' Recorders
 Pretty Rainbows
 Miss Macie
 Old MacDonald
 Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

5th Grade Program (songs played on choir chimes, no lyrics):

Theme from Surprise Symphony
 Londonderry Air
 Chorale (from Pictures at an Exhibition)
 Shenandoah
 Amazing Grace
 Two Fanfares for Bells
 Largo (from New World Symphony)
 Simple Gifts
 Chopsticks

6th Grade Musical:

Forever Onward Go
 Catching Up with the Princesses (parts 1,2, & 3)
 Misunderstood
 But We Love Them, Even So
 Beanstalking
 Sorry
 Bros.
 Forever Onward Go, Reprise

Morton Elementary Choir:

The Sorcerer's Hall
 Humpty Dumpty
 Hey! Ho! Nobody Home!
 You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch
 Castle on a Cloud
 The Brook
 Accentuate the Positive
 The Fox
 The Lonely Goatherd
 Drive My Car

PB&J:

Santa Claus is Comin' to Town
 Somewhere Out There
 Linus & Lucy
 Fly Like an Eagle
 Can't Buy Me Love (medley)
 Home

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical

context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou
 Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
 Mary Had a Little Lamb
 Take Me Out to the Ballgame
 Are You Sleeping
 This Land is Your Land
 Coming Around the Mountain
 The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
 Here We Come A-Wassailing
 Do You Hear What I Hear?
 Sleigh Ride
 Christmas Time Is Here
 Ding Dong Merrily on High
 Frosty the Snowman
 Jingle Bells
 Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
 Joy to the World
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
 Au Claire De La Lune
 Go To Sleep
 Go Tell Aunt Rhody
 Cha Cha Cha!
 Old MacDonald
 Pirates of the Carribean
 William Tell Overture
 Let's Get Started
 Hey Mr. Beat Boy
 Makin' It Up
 Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
 We Will Rock You
 Putin' on the Ritz
 Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
 Feliz Navidad
 The Man With the Bag
 Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields
Dies Irae
Love is an Open Door
Basin Street Blues
Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water
Nowhere to Go But Up
Let My People Go
For Good
Blue Skies

Thanks
Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



Dr. Craig Smock
 Superintendent
 Morton C.U.S.D. 709



craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 2:28:26 PM Central Standard Time

To: melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Risner, Melissa
 Cc: shane.rocke@mcusd709.org Rocke, Shane, timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy,
 heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org
 Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

Thank you, everyone, for that fantastic and very quick reply.

You have been a great help, and I appreciate you all so very much!

Craig

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 2:04 PM Risner, Melissa <melissa.risner@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Lettie Brown's general music programs 2023-2024 school year:

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year"
 "It's Beginning to Look Like Christmas"
 "Christmas Island"
 "The Polar Express Medley"
 "Holly, Jolly Christmas"
 "White Christmas"
 "Somewhere In My Memory"
 "Jingle Bells"
 "Up on the Housetop"
 "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth"
 "I Want A Hippopotamus for Christmas"
 "Melekaliki Maka"
 "Nuttin' for Christmas"
 "The Chipmunk Song"
 "Silver and Gold"
 "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer"
 "We Wish You A Merry Christmas"

"Hot Cross Buns"
 "A Claire de la Lune"
 "Rolling Merrily"
 "Go to Sleep"
 "Excerpt from Symphony #7" - Beethoven

"Teamwork, Our First Duet"
 "Softly Falls the Rain"
 "Latin Satin"
 "March of the Recorders"
 "Rockin' Along"
 "Pizza Polka"

5th Grade Musical: "The Castaways" a 1990s musical which has been discontinued and out of print.

"The Castaways"
 "The Shoe Shine Song"
 "The Milky Way"
 "Little Child"
 "Choose Me"
 "Trickster's Tune"
 "Home Within Our Hearts"

Melissa 😊

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:14 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Perfect. Thanks, Shane!

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:08 PM Rocke, Shane <shane.rocke@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Below is Lincoln general music programs, Morton Elementary Choir, and PB&J repertoire for 2023-2024 school year

Lincoln Elementary School:

Kindergarten Program:

Jolly Old St. Nicholas
 Up on the Housetop
 I'm a Little Snowman
 Tapping, Tapping Little Elf
 Santa is His Name-o
 5 Candy Canes
 I saw Three Ships
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 Silent Night

1st Grade Program:

Here we come a-Wassailing
 The Holly and the Ivy (first verse)
 Good King Wenceslas (first two verses)
 Deck the Hall
 Ding Dong Merrily on High
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 Silent Night

2nd Grade Program:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
 Jingle Bell Rock
 It's Beginning to Look like Christmas
 I'll be Home for Christmas
 Frosty the Snowman
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 Silent Night

3rd Grade Program:

Somewhere in my Memory (from Home Alone)

Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
 Christmas Time is Here
 Silver Bells
 Who Would Imagine a King (from The Preacher's Wife)
 Welcome Christmas (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas)
 We Wish You a Merry Christmas
 Silent Night

4th Grade Program (songs played on recorders, no lyrics):

Au Claire de la Lune
 Go to Sleep
 Softly Falls the Rain
 March of the Recorders
 Hot Cross Buns
 Pizza Polka
 Jingle Bells
 Go Tell Aunt Rhody
 Austrian Folk Song
 French Folk Tune
 Rockin' Recorders
 Pretty Rainbows
 Miss Macie
 Old MacDonald
 Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

5th Grade Program (songs played on choir chimes, no lyrics):

Theme from Surprise Symphony
 Londonderry Air
 Chorale (from Pictures at an Exhibition)
 Shenandoah
 Amazing Grace
 Two Fanfares for Bells
 Largo (from New World Symphony)
 Simple Gifts
 Chopsticks

6th Grade Musical:

Forever Onward Go
 Catching Up with the Princesses (parts 1,2, & 3)
 Misunderstood
 But We Love Them, Even So
 Beanstalking
 Sorry
 Bros.
 Forever Onward Go, Reprise

Morton Elementary Choir:

The Sorcerer's Hall
 Humpty Dumpty
 Hey! Ho! Nobody Home!
 You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch
 Castle on a Cloud
 The Brook
 Accentuate the Positive
 The Fox
 The Lonely Goatherd
 Drive My Car

PB&J:

Santa Claus is Comin' to Town
 Somewhere Out There
 Linus & Lucy

Fly Like an Eagle
Can't Buy Me Love (medley)
Home

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,

Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
Mary Had a Little Lamb
Take Me Out to the Ballgame
Are You Sleeping
This Land is Your Land
Coming Around the Mountain
The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
Here We Come A-Wassailing
Do You Hear What I Hear?
Sleigh Ride
Christmas Time Is Here
Ding Dong Merrily on High
Frosty the Snowman
Jingle Bells
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Joy to the World
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
Au Claire De La Lune
Go To Sleep
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Cha Cha Cha!
Old MacDonald
Pirates of the Caribbean
William Tell Overture
Let's Get Started
Hey Mr. Beat Boy
Makin' It Up
Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
We Will Rock You
Putin' on the Ritz
Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
Feliz Navidad
The Man With the Bag
Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields
Dies Irae
Love is an Open Door
Basin Street Blues
Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water
Nowhere to Go But Up
Let My People Go
For Good
Blue Skies

Thanks
Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org Beutel, Timothy

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 2:54:40 PM Central Standard Time

To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig
Cc: melissa.risner@mcusd709.org Risner, Melissa, shane.rocke@mcusd709.org Rocke, Shane,
heather.berger@mcusd709.org Heather Berger, jeffrey.arbisi@mcusd709.org Jeffrey Arbisi, joseph.sander@mcusd709.org
Joseph Sander, principals@mcusd709.org Principals-All-Schools

That is a whole lot of songs! :)

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 2:28 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Thank you, everyone, for that fantastic and very quick reply.

You have been a great help, and I appreciate you all so very much!

Craig

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 2:04 PM Risner, Melissa <melissa.risner@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Lettie Brown's general music programs 2023-2024 school year:

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year"
 "It's Beginning to Look Like Christmas"
 "Christmas Island"
 "The Polar Express Medley"
 "Holly, Jolly Christmas"
 "White Christmas"
 "Somewhere In My Memory"
 "Jingle Bells"
 "Up on the Housetop"
 "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth"
 "I Want A Hippopotamus for Christmas"
 "Melekaliki Maka"
 "Nuttin' for Christmas"
 "The Chipmunk Song"
 "Silver and Gold"
 "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer"
 "We Wish You A Merry Christmas"

"Hot Cross Buns"
 "A Claire de la Lune"
 "Rolling Merrily"
 "Go to Sleep"
 "Excerpt from Symphony #7" - Beethoven
 "Teamwork, Our First Duet"
 "Softly Falls the Rain"
 "Latin Satin"
 "March of the Recorders"
 "Rockin' Along"
 "Pizza Polka"

5th Grade Musical: "The Castaways" a 1990s musical which has been discontinued and out of print.

"The Castaways"
 "The Shoe Shine Song"
 "The Milky Way"
 "Little Child"
 "Choose Me"
 "Trickster's Tune"
 "Home Within Our Hearts"

Melissa 😊

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:14 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Perfect. Thanks, Shane!

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 1:08 PM Rocke, Shane <shane.rocke@mcusd709.org> wrote:
 Below is Lincoln general music programs, Morton Elementary Choir, and PB&J repertoire for 2023-2024 school year

Lincoln Elementary School:

Kindergarten Program:

Jolly Old St. Nicholas
Up on the Housetop
I'm a Little Snowman
Tapping, Tapping Little Elf
Santa is His Name-o
5 Candy Canes
I saw Three Ships
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

1st Grade Program:

Here we come a-Wassailing
The Holly and the Ivy (first verse)
Good King Wenceslas (first two verses)
Deck the Hall
Ding Dong Merrily on High
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

2nd Grade Program:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
Jingle Bell Rock
It's Beginning to Look like Christmas
I'll be Home for Christmas
Frosty the Snowman
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3rd Grade Program:

Somewhere in my Memory (from Home Alone)
Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
Christmas Time is Here
Silver Bells
Who Would Imagine a King (from The Preacher's Wife)
Welcome Christmas (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas)
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

4th Grade Program (songs played on recorders, no lyrics):

Au Claire de la Lune
Go to Sleep
Softly Falls the Rain
March of the Recorders
Hot Cross Buns
Pizza Polka
Jingle Bells
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Austrian Folk Song
French Folk Tune
Rockin' Recorders
Pretty Rainbows
Miss Macie
Old MacDonald
Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

5th Grade Program (songs played on choir chimes, no lyrics):

Theme from Surprise Symphony
Londonderry Air
Chorale (from Pictures at an Exhibition)
Shenandoah
Amazing Grace

Two Fanfares for Bells
 Largo (from New World Symphony)
 Simple Gifts
 Chopsticks

6th Grade Musical:
 Forever Onward Go
 Catching Up with the Princesses (parts 1,2, & 3)
 Misunderstood
 But We Love Them, Even So
 Beanstalking
 Sorry
 Bros.
 Forever Onward Go, Reprise

Morton Elementary Choir:
 The Sorcerer's Hall
 Humpty Dumpty
 Hey! Ho! Nobody Home!
 You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch
 Castle on a Cloud
 The Brook
 Accentuate the Positive
 The Fox
 The Lonely Goatherd
 Drive My Car

PB&J:
 Santa Claus is Comin' to Town
 Somewhere Out There
 Linus & Lucy
 Fly Like an Eagle
 Can't Buy Me Love (medley)
 Home

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:22 PM Beutel, Timothy <timothy.beutel@mcusd709.org> wrote:

Dr. Smock,
 Here is my list for both schools I teach at. Also, as mentioned earlier, any sacred music taught in my classroom (Grundy or MJHS) is taught and presented at concerts within the context of our curriculum and the historical context of the music.

Grundy:

5/6 Program:

Skip to My Lou
 Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
 Mary Had a Little Lamb
 Take Me Out to the Ballgame
 Are You Sleeping
 This Land is Your Land
 Coming Around the Mountain
 The Aloha Song

1/2 Program:

The Holly and the Ivy
 Here We Come A-Wassailing
 Do You Hear What I Hear?
 Sleigh Ride

Christmas Time Is Here
Ding Dong Merrily on High
Frosty the Snowman
Jingle Bells
Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
Joy to the World
We Wish You a Merry Christmas
Silent Night

3/4 Program:

Hot Cross Buns
Au Claire De La Lune
Go To Sleep
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Cha Cha Cha!
Old MacDonald
Pirates of the Carribean
William Tell Overture
Let's Get Started
Hey Mr. Beat Boy
Makin' It Up
Stinky Pirates

MJHS Choir:

Fall Concert:

Pure Imagination
We Will Rock You
Putin' on the Ritz
Touch the Sky

Winter Concert:

Fun, Fun, Fun
Feliz Navidad
The Man With the Bag
Christmas Time Is Here

Choir Festival:

Flanders Fields
Dies Irae
Love is an Open Door
Basin Street Blues
Moon River

Final Concert:

Bridge Over Troubled Water
Nowhere to Go But Up
Let My People Go
For Good
Blue Skies

Thanks
Tim

On Wed, Feb 28, 2024 at 12:09 PM Smock, Craig <craig.smock@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Hello, Everyone!

I am writing to all of our choral music teachers in the district for help in responding to a letter that was sent to us from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

In the letter, that organization indicates that "they have been informed that the District's music education program frequently includes Christian worship music and pageants as a part of its curriculum."

The letter does go on to say that it is fine to teach religious music alongside other secular music, which is true and is actually what we do.

In response, I'd like to list every single choral song that we teach our students over this 2023-24 school year.

Can you please send me the list that you have, or at least what you know of as of today?

If you have any questions, just let me know. I know that you all do a phenomenal job of balancing the music selections. I just want to prove that through this task.

Thanks for your help!

Craig

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709

