

Rolling Pebbles

The Rolling Pebbles Band performs regularly at Kennebunk Elementary School. The band is made up of 60 to 80 first, second, and third grade students from KES. Several teachers and the school resource officer participate in music making with the band. The RP Band performs at Monday Morning All-School Meetings and other special school wide functions.

The group performs a core selection of songs every Monday. The core songs consist of “Let’s Bring It On”, “Happy, Happy Birthday”, “KES” and “Something Good”. “Let’s Bring It On” is the song that is played as the classrooms gather together in the gymnasium. The lyrics help remind students of themes: we are here to learn; the choices we make reflect not only on us but our school; and we prepare together to take on the challenges ahead of us for the school week. “Happy, Happy Birthday” is an engaging song that gets audience hands clapping. As a group, we get to celebrate the week’s birthdays for students and staff. “KES” is a song that was created merging two school songs, Park Street School and Cousens School. These two schools merged when KES was built. The lyrics come directly from those two songs composed by Keith McClelland, a former MSAD #71 music educator. “Something Good” is performed at the end of our Monday Morning Meetings. The song reminds students and staff that good things happen when we all work and learn together. Other songs that are played throughout the school year for special events include, “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle”, “Pilgrims”, “We Are One”, “Dr. Seuss, We Love You” and more.

The Rolling Pebbles Band practices weekly to learn the songs and work on musicianship. Each practice is thirty minutes long. The third grade students practice on their assigned instruments (xylophones, guitars, recorders) and are responsible for them during practices and for performances. They move their instrument to the stage for each performance and back to the music room following the performance. The first and second graders make up the chorus for the Rolling Pebbles. They focus on learning lyrics and singing the melodies of each song.

Rolling Pebbles membership starts in first grade. Kennebunk Elementary School has about 360 first through third grade students who are potentially eligible for Rolling Pebbles. Our membership goal is to provide the opportunity for students, who wish to participate, the ability to earn a spot in the band at least once during their time at KES. However, not all students are interested in performing on stage on a regular basis. These students share their musical talents with their peers, friends, and family during the Spring Showcase for their grade each year at KES.

Pebbles earn their way into the band in various ways. They may be asked to participate based on their active music making efforts and proven listening skills displayed on a regular basis during music class. They may also earn their way into the band by learning to play the Rolling Pebbles core songs on guitar or the recorder. At the end of every school year a small group of students are selected to be in the Rolling Pebbles for the upcoming school year. At the beginning of the school year the band starts small, about 25 students. It grows during the fall and does not reach its peak in

membership until February break. New students are gradually introduced to the band. Some current members choose to leave over the course of the year, and this opens spaces for new members. On average, by the end of the school year, more than half of the 360 students available for Rolling Pebbles have participated.

Rolling Pebbles may also be asked to leave and rethink their commitment to the band. Members who do not follow established school rules and music room rules, during their regularly scheduled music class, Rolling Pebbles practices and performances will be dismissed from the group. Does this mean they will not be members again? No, they may earn their way back into the band by demonstrating the same efforts to music making on a regular basis that they displayed when being asked to join.

Goals for the members of the Rolling Pebbles band:

1. Build and improve the musical sound of the Rolling Pebbles as the school year progresses.
2. Establish an environment that provides an opportunity for musical growth for each member.
3. Develop musicianship through practice and performance.
4. Be positive models and contributing members to the band and school.
5. Build a base music making for life long learning.
6. Provide the opportunity to show that today's efforts will help build future successes.