

INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS

MONTHLY IFTA NEWSLETTER

ELEMENTARY IFTA

The November issue will dive into E-IFTA so elementary school families can get a good idea of how the program is organized and if it's a good fit for them. Of course, we think it is!

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TEACHER FEATURE

Each issue we'll introduce you to one of our IFTA teachers.

This month, meet a dedicated E-IFTA staff member!

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WHAT'S NEW?

A brief summary of what's coming down the pike for our summer programs next year. Hear about important dates and information for registration.

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FOLLOW US!





Teacher Feature



ELEMENTARY IFTA

BY KARA DRINKWATER

Elementary Institute for the Arts is a weekly enrichment program offered for four weeks during the month of July. Students explore Art, Music, Theatre, and Dance courses with different themes that are relevant to student culture and interests. Every week there are different themes for each class. Some examples of previous themes were World Drumming Fun, UKE Can Do It!, Move & Groove, Seuss it Up, It's a Rap! and many more.

Do you know a young person who loves art, or music, or acting and dancing? Often times during the school year elective courses are the highlight of a student's day! Having the opportunity to be immersed in the arts for the entire day is a dream!

Arts experiences increase critical thinking, teaching students to take the time to be more careful and thorough in how they observe the world. The arts provide challenges for learners at all levels. Arts education connects students with their own culture as well as with the wider world. Arts instruction helps children with the development of motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision-making, risk-taking, and inventiveness. A report by Americans for the Arts states that "Young people who participate regularly in the arts (three hours a day on three days each week through one full year) are four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement, to participate in a math and science fair, or to win an award for writing an essay or poem than children who do not participate."

Each summer students from all over Northern Virginia come together for this experience broadening their lens of Arts Education while being exposed to students from other life backgrounds.

We sent out an anonymous parent survey at the end of last year for our E-IFTA families to get their feedback and one family had this to share, "We are truly happy that we found this program; my children enjoy it every day and have learned so much - not only in terms of the "art skills" but also in their confidence, independence, value of the arts, and so much more! We would like to thank all the teachers for being an inspiration to our children and for sharing their skills with them. Also, we thank the administration for putting together such a neat program that provides children with unique opportunities in a safe and fun setting." I hope next summer you consider sending your own children to IFTA or telling a friend about us!

Meet **Ms. Kmetz**! She has been a teacher at E IFTA for as long as the program has existed! During the school year she is a Music teacher at Lees Corner Elementary School. At E-IFTA she has taught World Drumming, Ukulele, Guitar, Building Guitars, and Building Dulcimers. She took the time and answered our interview questions:

What was your favorite part of E-IFTA?

"Elementary Institute for the Arts is a great way to spend a summer engaged in music that is unlike the normal school year. I've been able to bring my love of world music drumming and ukulele and develop classes that are super unique."

Ms. Kmetz works to create themes every year for the four weeks of E-IFTA. She shared, "I like to find out of the box ideas and see how we can make them work. We've been able to build our own guitars and dulcimers in past years that students get to build and keep. It's a great process to watch "stuff" become a playable instrument. I also love that I get to see what the students are into! I love using their ideas to help guide mine!"

Why should families sign up their children for E-IFTA?

"E-IFTA is my favorite two weeks of the summer. What's special about this camp is that we immerse into the creative arts and get to explore many things that aren't done in a typical elementary school. The "classes" at this camp are for independent thinkers and challenge students to be great communicator and work with new friends." Ms. Kmetz brings an enormous amount of energy to our program and we are so fortunate to have her every summer!



WHAT'S NEW?

IFTA NEWS:

- Since we are going to a 2 week program option students will self design their schedules and ultimately be able to register for 8 different classes if they choose to register for 2- 2 week sessions (4 weeks).
- Our new system for scheduling will be a first come first serve basis. When classes are full you can be wait-listed or registered in your second choice. **You'll want to sign up early this year!**

E-IFTA NEWS:

- We have opened up our program to rising 3rd graders! We plan to divide classes as best as we can by age.

GENERAL NEWS:

- **HOT OFF THE PRESS! Mark your calendars! IFTA and E-IFTA is slated to begin July 6th!**
- Teachers interested in applying to work a 2 week or 4 week class should reach out to Kara Drinkwater at kmdrinkwater@fcps.edu. Jobs will be posted in February through the Job Opportunity page within FCPS.

Graciously,

