

August 21, 2017

17385 US Hwy 17

Hampstead, NC 28443

To Whom It May Concern,

I am an elementary Music teacher in Pender County, North Carolina. I had the wonderful opportunity to work with Mr. Charles Pettee in May of 2017. Mr. Pettee was able to complete a week-long residency at our school through a Grassroots Grant funded by the North Carolina Arts Council. For me, as the Music teacher, it was the best week of the school year! The students were able to connect with traditional North Carolina folk music in a way that was meaningful to them through story, songs, and the introduction of a variety of instruments.

Mr. Pettee was able to work with our 4th graders, 2nd graders, and 5th graders throughout the week. In addition, he ended the week with two culminating concerts for all of the students at our school. Mr. Pettee was very flexible in accommodating our school schedule with its early start and in working with larger groups than he had in the past. He was able to work with approximately 100 4th graders to help them compose a song specific to our school and region. He worked to incorporate their ideas and words throughout the drafting process until the song was finalized. Then, the 4th grade students were able to present their composition to their peers at the final concert. The students were so proud!

In working with the different grade levels, Mr. Pettee varied the songs he shared and the way he presented the historical information in order to engage learners of differing ages. Mr. Pettee went above and beyond our expectations while he was here at our school, including presenting a special session for students who are in a self-contained classroom for students with exceptional needs. All of the students ended the week with a better understanding of North Carolina folk music and the instruments traditionally used to create it. After the Friday concerts, several classroom teachers approached me to share how much they personally enjoyed the concerts and how engaged their students had been all week.

In closing, I would highly recommend Mr. Charles Pettee for any school residency or music program. Topsail Elementary greatly benefitted from his visit this past year, and we would look forward to another residency in the future!

Sincerely,

Laura Beth Payne, M.A., NBCT

Music Teacher, Topsail Elementary School