

*Brendan's presence in a school lights up the entire building. He captured the imaginations of all our students with his mesmerizing stories and captivating music.*

**Bob Mahler**  
**Principal**  
**Shutesbury Elementary**

*In my 25 years of working in schools, I'd never seen a music teacher with such an impact on kids of all ages. You could see in their eyes the ecstasy of the new discovery Brendan was bringing to them. His gift is a rare treasure indeed.*

**Jon Gailmor**  
**Performing Artist**

*Brendan Taaffe is an excellent singer, fiddler and guitarist who is deeply grounded in New England dance traditions. Brendan has achieved what I consider to be the highest goal of any dance teacher; imparting the love of dance to his students.*

**Peter Amidon**  
**Dance Caller and Teacher**

## **brendan taaffe**

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# **brendan taaffe**



**TRADITIONAL DANCE,  
SINGING & STORYTELLING  
FOR SCHOOLS**



**Residencies**  
**Assembly Programs**  
**Community Dance**

## brendan taaffe

Juried member of the Teaching Artist Roster, Vermont Arts Council

Eligible for New England States Touring (NEST) grant program

Master's of music performance from the Irish World Music Centre, University of Limerick

Director and founder of Turtle Dove Harmony, sponsor of community singing workshops

Has performed and taught across the United States and in Germany, Sweden, Holland, Bulgaria, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Canada

Founding member of Magic Foot, a prominent contra dance band

Author of *Handy with the Stick*, a book about the Irish fiddle tradition



I love working with children. I find that traditional songs, dances and stories make music fun, create community, and teach valuable lessons.

My goal is to create a culture of listening, respect and creativity. Each component of a residency contributes to these goals: **the dance traditions of North America** are a fun and joyous means to this end—teaching us all to work together to create something good; **stories from around the world** bring us to a quiet, listening place; and **singing** is simply one of the highest things.

As an old fiddler once said: "Music is for the upbuilding of all people."

Each community is unique, so I work with you to create the residency that fits your needs. Please be in touch with any questions or ideas.

## DANCE PROGRAMS (All Ages)

The dance traditions of North America and the British Isles are fun, joyous, and build community. Circle dances, play party games, and contras teach children how to cooperate while having fun, instilling a love of movement and traditional music.

As the culmination of a multi-day residency, a community dance with live music is a fantastic way to bring people together in a spirit of celebration and respect.

To schedule a week-long residency for your school, to set up programs by the day, or to schedule a community dance, please contact:

**Brendan Taaffe at (802)770-0857  
or email [brendan@brendantaaffe.com](mailto:brendan@brendantaaffe.com)  
[www.brendantaaffe.com](http://www.brendantaaffe.com)**



## STORY PROGRAMS (All Ages)

Story traditions from around the world are a rich source of imagination and often have lessons wrapped up in the tale. I weave stories throughout all of my work, but here are some specific programs that I offer.

### Tricky Situations and Clever Escapes

Just about every tradition has a trickster—from Anansi to Brer Rabbit, from Ghana to Sweden. Kids love these trickster stories from around the world, where cleverness prevails over strength and the underdog usually wins.

### Caring for Each Other; Caring for the Earth

Using stories with a specific focus on stewardship and respect, we explore different ways to care for the world we live in.

## ZIMBABWEAN MBIRA MUSIC

With grant support from the Vermont Arts Council, I have been studying the traditional Shona music of Zimbabwe. A residency focusing on this music introduces the culture and geography of Zimbabwe and teaches children to play the mbira, a traditional thumb piano. The music is magical—children are fascinated by these instruments and love the chance to play.

**Be sure to check out grant opportunities through the Vermont Arts Council:**

