

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CURRICULUM

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Reviewed, updated, and referenced to current Educational Standards (as discussed in the Spring 1998 meetings preparing for the upcoming Music Program Evaluation)

Abbreviation Formats used for referencing standards...

[Op/Page/Standard#] Example - [Op/10/11-13]

The above format refers to...

[The Opportunity To Learn Standards For Music Education – MENC 1994 Edition / The page number of the referenced publication / The specific numbers of the standards from that page]

[Nat/Page/Standard#] Example - [Nat/44/5-9]

The above format refers to...

[The National Standards For Arts Education – Published by the Consortium of National Arts Organizations 1994 Edition / The page number of the referenced publication / The specific numbers of the standards from that page]

ORCHESTRAL PROGRAM
(String Instruments)
GRADES 4 - 8

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Beginning string students are recruited in September in conjunction with the total instrumental recruitment procedures at the school which includes classroom visitations in grades 4-5 by the instrumental teacher. A letter to parents and an instrumental registration form are distributed to students. The recruitment procedure culminates in a Parent's Night in September, at which the instrumental program is described, various instruments are demonstrated, an instrument rental plan is described, and written information is disseminated.

Since a student selection process does not exist, and is not necessarily desirable, student interest is the only prerequisite to begin lessons on an instrument.

Instruction in small group lessons class is aimed at the development of performance skills on violin, viola, cello and string bass, including the general areas of technique, music-reading and musicianship. ^[Op/10/12] These lessons are homogeneously grouped whenever possible. String Orchestra classes serve to develop ensemble skills, such as rhythmic accuracy, intonation, balance, blend and stylistic interpretation. These string groups perform extensively throughout the school year, providing members the learning experience inherent in public performance. ^[Op/10/11]

All experienced string players are members of either the Grade 5-6 String Orchestra or the Grade 7-8 String Orchestra, depending on performance-level achievement and grade level. Experienced Suzuki String students, or students with other string training in grades K-3 meet as a separate group for their fourth grade year. Beginning students are members of Beginning Orchestra and usually qualify for membership in the regular String Orchestra after approximately one year of instruction.

The grade 5-6 String Orchestra Ensemble performs string ensemble literature of Levels I and II in technical-difficulty as delineated in the Handbook for Applied Music of the New York State Education Department. The Grade 7-8 String Orchestra performs literature comparable to technical-difficulty of Levels II and III. The Handbook rates the technical difficulty of published literature from Level I, the easiest to perform, to Level VI, the most difficult to perform.

The basic instructional materials used to present musical concepts to beginning strings are the pieces from the Suzuki Method Book I. Adjustments are made to make it possible to have mixed string groups study and perform these pieces. Extra materials are used to reinforce reading ability within the basic finger patterns and rhythmic figures which will be appearing in the 5-6 orchestra literature.

Fundamental string performance-skills are sequentially introduced and reinforced throughout this course of study. Ensemble music and other supplementary materials also are studied in class lessons. Students are encouraged to practice assigned lessons daily at home, establishing a routine of regular individual study.

A limited inventory of school-owned string instruments is maintained at the Middle School. These instruments are rented to students, on a first-come, first-served basis. The current rental fee for these instruments is \$30.00 for the school year. Op/13/10

The progress of string students is monitored regularly throughout the year and evaluated through teacher observation, parent contact and public performance. Grades for skill development, performance achievement and effort are issued four times a year in grades 5-8.

All orchestral ensembles perform in the Winter and Spring Concerts in December and May. Other performances which groups have participated in are... Concerts at the Senior Center, Tours of the Elementary Schools, Country Dance Nights for members of the community, accompaniment of younger Suzuki students in concerts, fiddling concerts in the elementary schools for ice cream socials, performances for visitors to the school as well as grade level events. Op/13/11

Because of the nature of string performance and the inherent difficulties encountered in learning to play a string instrument, students at all levels of development are encouraged to take private lessons and to participate in string programs outside of the school. The University of Connecticut Community School of the Arts and Mansfield Middle School's Middle School String Program maintain a cooperative arrangement in this regard. To be eligible for membership in the orchestra program at the Community School of the Arts, students first must be active participants in the school program. [Op/10/13]

Communication with the parents is considered vital to the success of the Middle School String Program. Each student receives a copy of the Mansfield Middle School Instrumental Music Handbook which provides information for parents and students concerning all aspects of the program, from class descriptions to concert attire. In addition to informing parents of student achievement through the aforementioned evaluative tools and the Instrumental Music Handbook, the teacher regularly informs parents of program activities through personal and written communication.

ORCHESTRAL PROGRAM
(String Instruments)
GRADES 4 - 8

STUDENT COMPETENCIES

The following levels of performance (I - III) include the minimal competencies that Middle School string students are expected to achieve. The levels are not attached to a particular age, since students at any grade-level may begin instruction if scheduling is possible.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL I

Under normal conditions, Level I competencies should be attainable by a string student after one or two years of study. (Nat/42/2) (Nat/44/5-9)

The student will know and demonstrate:

- an understanding of the parts of the instrument, bow and their care.
- good posture and the correct playing position while sitting or standing and at rest.
- firm left hand finger pressure.
- the ability to produce a full, resonant tone.
- the ability to perform elementary pizzicato techniques.
- proper bow control and technique using middle, lower half and upper half of the bow.
- the ability to read and perform the following note and rest values: whole, half, quarter and eighth.
- the finger patterns for the following major scales:
 - violin - G, D
 - viola and cello - G, D
 - String bass - G, D
- the ability to match pitches.
- acceptable intonation while performing alone or with other players.
- the ability to determine if their instrument is in tune.
- requisite left and right hand coordination needed to perform music of Level I difficulty.
- the ability to interpret 4/4, 3/4 and 2/4 time signatures

- the ability to play simple tunes by ear.
- the ability to perform simple melodies from memory.
- proper rehearsal etiquette and self-discipline.
- the ability to respond correctly to visual and verbal directions by the conductor.
- an initial awareness of the various types of occupations in instrumental music, such as: performers, composers, teachers, sales persons and repair persons.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL II

Under normal conditions, Level II competencies should be attainable by a string student after two or three years of study. (Nat/42/2)(Nat/44/5-9)

The student will know and demonstrate:

- the correct physical approach to proper tone production and bow control.
- the ability to tune their instrument, given open string pitches, with the aid of fine tuners.
- increased proficiency in a variety of 1st position finger patterns.
- the ability to perform the major scales of G, D and C.
- increased proficiency in bowing techniques, including detache and martele.
- proper bow control and technique for slurs of uneven note values, legato and staccato.
- increased proficiency in pizzicato technique.
- proper left hand placement for elementary exercises as follows:
 - violin, viola - first position
 - cello - extended position
 - string bass - half position
- musicianship and the ability to convey subtle feeling and emotions in the course of performing music at their technical level.
- the ability to maintain a resonant full tone and an even level of dynamics while performing melodic lines of uneven note values.
- the ability to recognize and perform in tune intervals greater than a whole step.
- the ability to sight-read music one level below their current technical level.
- the ability to recognize and follow conducting patterns in duple, triple and subdivided compound meters.
- the ability to interpret and perform musical symbols, terms and signs as found in intermediate (Level II - III) ensemble music.
- the ability to perform basic rhythms and bowing patterns in 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 2/2 and 6/8 meters.
- the ability to perform dotted quarter - eighth note and triplet rhythms.
- the ability to appreciate music by listening to recordings.
- the ability to recognize repeated passages, scale patterns, arpeggios, sequences, variations to dynamics, blend and harmony and variations in tempi.

- improved ensemble skills by performing music which necessitates attention to dynamics, blend and harmony, and variations in tempi.
- the value of participating in the Middle School String Program by:
 - a) reacting positively to music performed in classes and rehearsals.
 - b) attending musical functions on their own.
 - c) participating in rehearsals with involvement, enthusiasm and self-discipline.
- the ability to play by ear melodies one level below their current technical level.
- the ability to memorize melodies one level below their current technical level.
- an awareness of their potential (abilities, achievements and interests) in pursuing a career in music.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL III

Under normal conditions, Level III competencies should be attainable by a string student after three or four years of study. (Nat/42/2) (Nat/44/5-9)

The student will know and demonstrate:

- the ability to play in tune and to make slight adjustments in pitch while in the act of performing.
- the ability to perform simple positions shifts in context with their part.
- the ability to organize and perform a variety of bowings with maximum efficiency to achieve differing musical effects.
- more advanced bowing techniques, including spiccato strokes.
- the ability to perform with a clear, pleasing tone.
- the ability to employ vibrato to heighten musical effects on sustained tones.
- the ability to tune their own instrument.
- the ability to recognize and utilize conventional tempo and dynamic markings.
- the ability to perform the major scales of G, D, A, C and F and to perform music in those keys.
- the ability to interpret and perform musical symbols, terms and signs as found in intermediate/advanced (Level III - IV) ensemble music.
- the ability to memorize music at their technical level.
- the ability to perform a variety of rhythm patterns in simple and compound meters and to perform music in changing meters.
- the ability to sight-read music one level below their current technical level.
- the ability to recognize and perform with correct stylistic interpretation examples of music of the Baroque and Classical compositional periods.
- the ability to recognize and perform syncopation and to correctly interpret syncopated patterns in popular-style music.
- the ability to exercise proper musical leadership.
- the initiative in seeking out solo and ensemble performance opportunities.

- the value of participating in the Middle School String Program by:
 - a) reacting favorably to public performances.
 - b) describing why certain experiences, activities and musical examples are preferred to others.
 - c) attending concerts and listening to recordings of exemplary string performance.
 - d) willingly participating in activities that benefit the string program.

- the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary to begin considering a lifetime involvement in music, which may or may not include a career in music.

MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

GRADES FOUR TO EIGHT

Philosophy, Goals and Objectives

The instrumental music program is designed to develop in each student, as fully as possible, the ability to perform, to create, and to understand music. Because performance is a natural outgrowth of the study of a musical instrument, it offers students the opportunity to display their acquired knowledge and skills in such a way that mutually benefits their learning and the community at large. This reflects the role that music itself plays in all cultures.

Experience in instrumental music should provide a conceptual understanding of the basic music properties of melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, dynamics, and form. If instrumental music is to achieve its basic role, there must be a well-balanced, sequential course of study. In addition to extensive creative and interpretive opportunities that develop a functional understanding of music, there should also be experiences in listening, structural analysis, theory, and historical understanding of cultural development resulting in an aesthetic appreciation.

The Goals of the instrumental music program fall into five distinct areas which are playing, listening, creating, and valuing. Through the program, students will become more proficient in these areas by having the opportunity to:

- 1) discover, develop, and evaluate their talents and abilities relative to playing a musical instrument.
- 2) develop the ability to make aesthetic judgments based on critical listening and analysis of music.
- 3) interpret rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression as they appear in musical notation through both cognitive and psychomotor response.
- 4) develop self-expression by improvising, creating and making music alone as well as with others.
- 5) grow in the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of music, as a source of personal fulfillment.

The general objectives of the instrumental music program are:

Nat/42/#2,5-7

- 1) to develop the musical abilities of all students to the fullest possible extent.
- 2) to instruct students in the foundations of music performance.
- 3) to develop sequentially in all students the basic fundamentals of instrumental performance.
- 4) to develop performance independence in all students through an emphasis on music reading.
- 5) to provide students suitable opportunities for instrumental performance which will result in positive experiences.
- 6) to develop an understanding of and an appreciation for quality music literature of various periods and styles.
- 7) to develop in each student the self-discipline necessary to become a contributing and loyal member of an instrumental organization.
- 8) to recognize musically gifted students and provide appropriate experience for them.
- 9) to recognize students in need of remediation and provide the necessary assistance to them.
- 10) to develop in each student the understanding of the importance of working together toward the common goal of excellence in performance.
- 11) to evaluate student progress regularly through a teacher developed testing program.

BAND PROGRAM

(Wind and Percussion Instruments)

GRADES 4 - 8

Program Description

The band (wind and percussion) program consists of both small and large group instruction for each student enrolled. Small group instruction is in the form of a twenty minute weekly lesson, while large group instruction is accomplished through membership in one of three levels of band.

Op/9/7

The time for small group lessons is extracted from one half of one Related Arts class per week with students being grouped by grade level. Every effort is made to schedule the lessons homogeneously by instrument category. The size of the group is therefore determined primarily by the number of students in a grade level studying a particular instrument.

Op/10/12

The large group classes are held during the school's fifty minute X-period to facilitate cross grade level instruction. The three levels of band are: Beginning Band, Jr. Band, and Concert Band. These levels correspond to the three levels of student competencies which follow in this curriculum guide. Basically, first year students (Level I) are members for Beginning Band, second and third year students (Level II) form Jr. Band, and fourth and fifth year students (Level III) comprise Concert Band. The Jr. Band and Concert Band rehearse twice weekly for the entire school year. Fourth grade Beginning Band class meets once weekly during the second half of the year for a 55 minute period. Grade 5 & 6 Beginning Band meets once weekly after several months of small group instruction for a 50 minute X-period.

Op/9/7
Op/10/9,10

In addition to these three basic wind and percussion ensembles, there exists an elective in Jazz Band. This group provides those highly motivated students with the opportunity to expand their acquired technical skills in the study of music written in the "Big Band" style. The literature, however, is not limited to any one era. Familiarization with literature varying from Dixieland to Swing to Jazz Rock to popular (top 40's) is one goal of this program.

Op/11/17

Improvisation is also an element of this course of study. While limited work in improvisation is possible as part of the ensemble rehearsals, students are encouraged to take part in an after school class which focuses on improvisation through instruction in basic music theory. This includes ear training as well as studies in harmony.

Op/11/17

Rehearsals for Jazz Band include one fifty minute X-period and one after school session of seventy minutes. Attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory and necessary in order to maintain the high level of performance expected of this select group. Students interested in participating should consider this commitment in their decision making process. Participation in the Jazz Band is predicated on membership in the instrumental music program including those students who play piano/keyboard, rhythm guitar, or bass guitar.

Op/9/1,3

Further ensemble opportunities are provided based on student interest and ability. Over the past several years, for example, these groups have included; a Dixieland Band, Jazz Combo, Flute Trio, Clarinet Quartet, Woodwind Quintet, and Brass Quintet.

Op/11/17

Enrollment in the band program is based primarily on student interest. Any student wishing to study a wind (4-8) or percussion (5-8) instrument is able to do so by expressing that intent to the instrumental music teacher.

Op/10/12

During the first week of school, the instrumental music teacher explains the program to all fourth graders during a classroom visitation. Students in grade 5 are reminded of the program by school announcements or through related arts classes. The classroom visit allows the teachers to describe the program and to answer questions from students. Students also receive a letter for parents which briefly describes the program and extends an invitation to a more informative evening meeting.

The evening meeting held at the Middle School provides parents with an opportunity to meet the instrumental music faculty, experience the environment in which their child will study, listen to a discussion of the program, and enjoy a demonstration of various instruments available for study. The particulars of choosing and obtaining an instrument are also presented at this time.

Once the study of an instrument has been undertaken, the responsibility of daily practice is assumed. This is necessary in order to ensure adequate physical and musical development. Practice is essential for progress. If there is no practice there is no improvement.

Student success in instrumental music is based largely on invested time in practice. However, the amount of time spent is not as important as the quality and the regularity of the time spent. Establishing a routine and creating the proper environment will add greatly to the end result for the student.

The curriculum of the instrumental music program is accomplished through the use of one of several instrumental methods as well as appropriately graded compositions for each of the large ensembles. All books, sheet music and class related tapes are provided by the school for student use free of charge, and it is expected that the families of students will pay the replacement cost of any materials lost or damaged.

Op/9/5

Formal individual student evaluation is made quarterly throughout the school year in the form of report cards in which achievement, behavior, and effort are measured. The grades reflect these areas in both small and large group instructional settings and should serve as a guide for student improvement. Group evaluation is accomplished through the numerous performance experiences in which each group participates. These performances are audio-taped, and in most cases videotaped, and allow for self-evaluation on the part of the students.

Op/10/11

The overall goal of the band program is based on the philosophy which focuses on a commitment to excellence. An important aspect of this philosophy is the development of positive student self-concept. Based on research which reveals a direct relationship between achievement and self-concept, those teaching variables and strategies most effective in increasing academic achievement are employed. The areas of academic, vocational, social and civic, and personal goals are considered. The planned results of the band program should reflect the guiding light of American education in educating the whole child.

Op/9/13

MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM

GRADES 4 - 8

Student Competencies

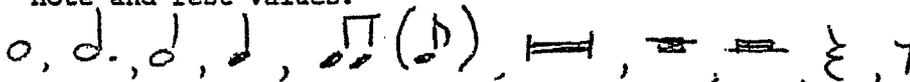
The following levels (I, II, III) include the minimal competencies that instrumental music students are expected to achieve. Although the levels are not attached to a particular age or grade, there is a link between level and years of study. Level I competencies should be achieved by students after one year of study. Level II competencies should be achieved by students after two to three years of study. And Level III competencies should be achieved by students after four to five years of study.

LEVEL I

By the end of this level, students will demonstrate:

Nat / 42 / 2[#]

Nat / 44 / 5[#]

- 1) the proper assembly, care and maintenance of the instrument.
- 2) the proper posture and embouchure formation (wind instruments) or hand position (percussionists).
- 3) the ability to produce a reasonably acceptable tone using proper tonguing and breath support.
- 4) the ability to recognize and play the following note and rest values:

- 5) the ability to recognize and play the following time signatures: 4/4, 3/4, 2/4.
- 6) the ability to recognize and play the following dynamic indications: f, p.
- 7) the ability to recognize and play the following tempo indications: allegro, moderato, andante.
- 8) the ability to recognize and play the following articulations: slur, tie, accent, staccato.
- 9) the ability to interpret the musical terms and symbols found in first year method books.
- 10) the ability to play a concert B^b scale one octave.
- 11) the ability to recognize and play in the following concert keys: B^b, E^b, F.
- 12) the ability to recognize when instruments are in tune.

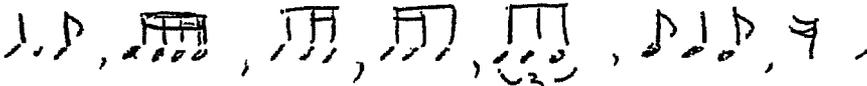
LEVEL I (continued)

- 13) the ability to play the following rudiments:
single-stroke roll, long roll, five-stroke roll,
flam.
- 14) the ability to sight-read simple melodies and
rhythmic patterns.
- 15) the ability to play simple melodies from memory.

LEVEL II

In addition to that achieved in Level I, students completing this level will demonstrate:

Nat/42/♯² Nat/44/♯⁵⁻⁷

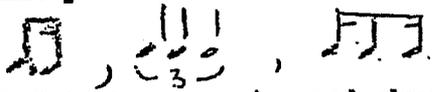
- 1) increased proficiency in playing fingerings and
positions learned in class.
- 2) greater ability to produce a tone which reflects
the appropriate quality of the specific instrument.
- 3) a gradual extension of range with increasing facility
and flexibility.
- 4) the ability to recognize and play the following
note and rest values:

- 5) the ability to recognize and play the following
time signatures: ϕ
- 6) the ability to recognize and play the following
dynamic indications: mf, mp, < >, sfz.
- 7) the ability to recognize and play the following
tempo indications: Maestoso, A Tempo, Vivace,
ritard.
- 8) the ability to recognize and play the following
articulations: legato, \wedge .
- 9) the ability to play all learned articulations
in a variety of combinations.
- 10) the ability to recognize and interpret musical
terms and symbols found in intermediate method
books.
- 11) the ability to play the following concert scales
one octave: A^b, E^b, B^b, C.
- 12) the ability to interpret the basic conducting
patterns.

LEVEL II (continued)

- 13) the ability to adjust his/her instrument to a given pitch.
- 14) the ability to play the following drum rudiments: paradiddle, nine-stroke roll, seventeen-stroke roll, flam-tap.
- 15) the ability to recognize different styles of music including march, ballad, swing, rock, etc.
- 16) the ability to play 32 measure pieces from memory.
- 17) the ability to play simple tunes by ear.
- 18) the ability to sight-read moderately simple melodies and rhythmic patterns.
- 19) the ability to perform compositions written with changing meter.

LEVEL III

In addition to that achieved in Levels I and II, students completing this level will demonstrate: Nat 42/2 Nat 44/5-7

- 1) improved ability to produce a characteristic tone on the instrument. This will include vibrato on certain instruments.
- 2) continued extension of range with further facility and flexibility.
- 3) the ability to recognize and play the following rhythmic patterns:

- 4) the ability to recognize and play the following time signatures: 3/8, 6/8.
- 5) the ability to recognize and play the following dynamic indications: ff, pp, fp, diminuendo, p - f.
- 6) the ability to recognize and play the following tempo indications: Largo, Adagio, Allegretto, Presto, rallentando.
- 7) the ability to recognize and play Marcato articulation and also to interpret any combination of learned articulations.
- 8) the ability to play the following concert scales
octave: F, G, B^b chromatic.

LEVEL III (continued)

- 9) the ability to play the seven essential rudiments.
- 10) the ability to recognize when the instrument is out of tune and make the necessary adjustments to correct it.
- 11) an understanding of multiple tonguing for certain wind instruments.
- 12) the ability to recognize and understand basic musical form.
- 13) an understanding of the relationship of their instrument to the rest of the band in terms of balance, blend, timbre, etc.
- 14) an understanding of the basic information of transposition and how their instrument relates to concert pitch.
- 15) the ability to sight-read melodic and rhythmic patterns of medium difficulty.
- 16) the ability to make appropriate stylistic interpretations.
- 17) the ability to respond to the nuances of conducting gestures.