

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC GRADES 4-8

PHILOSOPHY/RATIONALE

Throughout life, people have felt the need to communicate to those around them. One form of this communication has been through the "arts", particularly music. Music can serve as a mode of self-expression allowing for creativity and individuality. Students participate in music to gain a greater awareness of their own uniqueness by drawing upon their own multi-varied backgrounds and ethnic origins.

Music is an important key to understanding one's history as well as the foundations of other cultures. With the idea of music as a universal language, students are able to reinforce learning and knowledge of the social and cultural influences that have shaped civilizations throughout history and around the world.

Music fosters self-expression and contributes to the formation of well-rounded individuals via the growth of the creative side of their human development. Music education develops mental discipline through a spiral sequence of learning experiences. It includes the taxonomy of learning: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. It also nurtures an appreciation of music's aesthetic qualities.

At every level, the skills and knowledge acquired lead to the means for the expression of music. The realization of these goals, skills mastery, and artistic expression is the commitment of the grades 4-8 music program.

The music program is constructed to enable student achievement through active participation in small and large ensemble settings. By providing students with musical, technological, and aesthetic learning tools, the instrumental music program reinforces interdisciplinary skills and fosters full engagement in society with life-long learning.

The individual student is the focus of the program. Each child is valued as a unique person who is encouraged to evaluate his or her own efforts in an environment of acceptance and sharing. The end product is the child's personal success in using music as his or her own form of self-expression.

Each child, according to his or her own abilities and interests, has opportunities to develop skills, participate in musical performances, listen to music, and create original music. In groups of ensembles, students experience the best of cooperative learning, team spirit, and pride in unity.

The course addresses the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts as the Standards for Technological Literacy, and Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills. The course also addresses the National Standards for music.

The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards can be accessed at www.state.nj.us