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THE WEST HARTFORD MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

Philosophical Overview

The West Hartford Public Schools nurtures every student's ability to perform, create and respond to music of diverse cultures and historic periods. Music is a key component in the development of the whole person and is a universal expression of the human spirit. A life-long involvement with music enables the student to grow emotionally, intellectually and socially.

Importance of Music to Education

Music is an integral part of a child's education. Skills learned through music reinforce and improve learning in many subject areas, such as reading, math, language, visual art, and physical education.

In recent years much brain research has been undertaken to define the positive effects of music education. The noted Harvard professor, Howard Gardner, identifies music intelligence as one of the eight styles of learning for students. Other researchers have uncovered some significant results, such as:

- Primary Students who learn to read music while learning to read language achieve more positive results in their reading development.
- R. Cutietta, University of Arizona
- First and second graders who received sequenced singing and art lessons perform better in math and reading than students who received standard arts instruction.
-M. Gardiner, A. Fox, Brown University and Providence Music School



- Disadvantaged preschoolers display dramatic improvements in spatial reasoning ability after music training. Spatial IQ is crucial for higher brain functions such as complex mathematics. G. Shaw: “Early music training can enhance a child’s ability to reason.”
-F. Rauscher, G. Shaw, University of California
- Students with coursework/experience in arts instruction scored 51 points higher on the verbal portion of the SAT and 39 points higher on the math portion of the SAT than students with no coursework or experience in the arts.
-Profiles from the College Board, 1995

West Hartford Elementary Music Education

Vocal Music

Development of Musical Skills

Singing is the foundation of all music skills in the elementary vocal music curriculum. Using grade appropriate songs, singing games and rounds, music skills are sequentially taught and divided into five content areas:

MELODY

- Students learn to sing grade appropriate songs in tune.
- Simple note patterns are extracted from song material such as “sol” and “mi”. These melody notes are called solfa (do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do).
- The melodic patterns become more complex in each grade level.

RHYTHM

- Performing with a steady beat is essential in developing rhythmic skills.
- Initially, children will sing and clap simple rhythmic patterns, using quarter & eighth notes (♩ ♪♪) which are referred to as “ta” and “ti-ti.”
- The rhythmic patterns become more complex in each grade level.



READING & WRITING

- Reading and writing involve responding to rhythmic and melodic notation.
- Students demonstrate reading skills by decoding and performing written rhythms and melodies.
- Writing skills include rhythms (♩ ♪ ♫ ♬) and placing notes on the music staff



PART WORK

- In grades K-5, students combine singing with a rhythmic or melodic accompaniment.
- In grades 3-5, students progress to singing 2-3 part songs in large and small group settings.

FORM

- Form is the organization of musical patterns.
- Students first recognize the phrases and then learn how they are organized.

Instrumental Music

The instrumental music program provides intensive instruction to develop music skills and is a natural extension of the classroom music curriculum. Students in grades four and five have the opportunity to study a band or orchestra instrument. Small group lessons occur during the school day. Large ensembles rehearse weekly before school.

Student Progress Report:

Performs with correct position and posture.

Correct playing position and posture is the foundation for all successful instrumentalists.

Demonstrates good technique.

Technique is dexterity and facility on an instrument.



Plays with correct breath, bow or stick control.

Control of breath (winds), bow (strings), and sticks (percussion), is essential to produce a characteristic sound.

Applies proper bowing/tonguing/slurring technique.

Articulation of notes with the tongue (winds) and bow (strings) is important to develop good technique.

Performs with characteristic tone, on pitch.

Playing on pitch with characteristic tone is the product of proper breath control and embouchure (winds), bow control, finger placement and finger pressure (strings).

Reads rhythmic/melodic notation. Students are taught to read music notation.

Is developing ensemble skills.

Ensemble skills in band and orchestra include responding to conducting gestures, playing music in two or more parts, and performing with proper blend and balance.

Work Habits

Shows evidence of consistent practice and high quality preparation. Students are expected to practice daily, demonstrating careful preparation of assigned music, with emphasis on repetition and self-evaluation.

Focuses attentively during the lessons and rehearsals.

Brings necessary equipment to lessons and rehearsals.



THE WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM

West Hartford Elementary Fine Arts Standards

During the elementary years from Pre-K to grade 5 the goals and standards of the Visual Arts Department are sequenced to build upon each student's skills. The National Standards for the Arts (1994) and the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) (2015) serve as a foundation for instruction and expectation, ensuring implementation of a rigorous and relevant curriculum in the Visual Arts. Student experiences are developmentally appropriate and foster 21st century critical thinking skills. Art teachers will guide students in making meaningful connections between the Visual Arts and their everyday lives.

It is the expectation of the Visual Arts Department that every student will demonstrate an understanding of each of the Anchor Standards:

- **Creating:** applying art materials, techniques and processes; use and apply the elements and principles of design to create an art composition.
- **Connecting:** synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experience to make art; making connections with art and other subjects such as Math, Science and English.
- **Responding:** perceiving and analyzing artistic work; describing, analyzing and evaluating subject matter, symbols and ideas.
- **Presenting:** discussing works of art and being able to make judgments; selecting, analyzing, interpreting artistic work for presentation.



Lessons the Arts Teach

- The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer.
- The arts teach children to make good judgments that do not necessarily depend on rules.
- The arts celebrate multiple perspectives so that they may see the world in many ways.
- The arts show children to be willing and able to accept the world of possibility in their problem solving.
- The arts teach that the limits of language do not define what we know.
- The arts teach that small differences can have large effects.
- The arts teach students to think and express through use of a material (medium).
- The arts enable children to have an experience they can have from no other source.
- The arts teach children acceptance and appreciation for a wide variety of cultures, artists and artforms.

Adapted from Elliot Eisner's "10 Lessons the Arts Teach,"
NAEA publication.



THE WEST HARTFORD PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Mission Statement

The West Hartford Physical Education Program is based on helping students develop healthy, active lifestyles by experiencing a balance of activities in a positive, responsible, and cooperative environment. These activities include the movement areas of body management, manipulatives, educational gymnastics, dance, fitness, and adventure/cooperative education. These activities are appropriate for each child's developmental stage and ability level. Furthermore, these experiences are designed to create opportunities for our students that inspire confidence, honesty, creativity, teamwork, and a persistent drive to excel.

West Hartford Physical Education Standards

The standards for our program align with the National and State Standards for Physical Education.

Standard 1- Movement Skill Performance

The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.

Standard 2- Application of Concepts and Strategies

The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.

Standard 3 – Physical Activity and Fitness

The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.



Standard 4- Responsible Behavior

The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

Standard 5- Benefits of Physical Activity

The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for Health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and /or social interaction.

Elementary Physical Education Content Definitions

Body Management

Students execute locomotor movements (e.g. run, skip, jump), non-locomotor skills (e.g. twist, rock, balance), and various combinations of these skills. These are colored with the elements of space (e.g. direction, level), effort (e.g. speed, force), and relationship (e.g. mirror, match). In the upper elementary grades basic movement skills and concepts are refined into traditional sport skills (e.g. high jump in track, dribbling in soccer).

Manipulatives Skills

Students execute a variety of skills that show dexterity and coordination by handling small and large equipment, such as balls, hoops, ropes, paddles, and wands. Examples of manipulative skills include throwing, catching, striking, volleying, and dribbling.

Educational Gymnastics

Students used their body management skills in relationship to large apparatus. Skills include climbing, balancing, and supporting.



Dance

Dance is an opportunity to use functional movement skills in expressive ways. We emphasize two types at dance at the elementary level - creative and cultural. Creative dance stretches students to express ideas, feelings, stories, and ideas through movement. Cultural dance allows students to experience the richness of various parts of the world as reflected in music, rhythm, and movement. Folk dances from various countries, including American square, are included in cultural dance.

Physical Fitness

Students gain an understanding of the major components of fitness through activity. The major components of fitness include flexibility, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and cardiovascular endurance. Individual improvement is emphasized through goal setting.

Adventure/Cooperative Education

Students practice team building, problem solving, communication skills, and cooperation through group activities. These experiences are often integrated into the other activity units.



Grade Rubric

M = Masters and applies skills independently in most situations; Completes all assigned work at mastery level; Demonstrates active participation in all learning activities;

P = Progressing consistently towards mastering grade level objectives; Applies skills in some situations; Completes assigned tasks with limited mastery; Participates in most learning activities.

L = Limited progress in skill and concept development; Learning concept, but further practice needed; Skill is developing with support; Evidence of inconsistent progress towards mastering grade level objectives; Behavior may be interfering with progress; Participates inconsistently in learning activities;

E = Exceeds grade level expectation; exceptional; Initiates completion of enrichment/independent activity; Work is consistently above grade level expectations; Independently applies and extends their own learning.

Demonstrates Effort

1 = Excels

2 = Satisfactory

3 = Needs improvement

Shading = Shaded or dashed areas indicate that objective is not being formally assessed at this point in the year.

Marking System – A student could be marked down on a particular objective from a Mastery(M) one marking to a Progressing(P) the next marking period. This will be based on the material covered and the ability of the student to meet the objective that marking period.



Notes



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West Hartford, Connecticut