

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Lemont High School Music Department believes creating, responding to, connecting with, and performing music are essential for holistic musical growth. All music area students will strive to satisfy their artistic desires and develop the following characteristics:

- Thinking, feeling and acting creatively with music
- Respect for music as art and an integral part of life
- Appreciation for skilled musical performances from varied styles and from various periods
- Knowledge of music resources
- Critical analysis regarding the personal worth of music
- Knowledge about the influence of music throughout history

Courses offered within the Music curriculum provide various experiences of music observation and appreciation, instruction in techniques and artistry in either playing an instrument or vocal performance, and opportunities for practice and performance.

Based on their abilities and course level, students shall:

- Demonstrate technical skills required to sing or play an instrument correctly
- Participate in school and out-of-school rehearsals and performances of various choirs and bands
- Demonstrate skill in singing techniques pertaining to rhythm, counting and reading music
- Demonstrate skill in musicianship in phrasing, terminology, sight-reading and interpretation of music
- Critique music and performance in a constructive manner, using a frame of reference consisting of knowledge about influential musicians and their history

Grading Standards: Student grades provide feedback and encouragement for students involved in any of the department's programs. The evaluation of students' efforts and the measurement of their participation should provide opportunities for students to continue to excel in musical studies, performances, or other forms of musical expression. As all students enter the music area's performance-based courses with a unique baseline ability, growth is strongly favored in grading, while the standards and procedures involved in attainment (performance) are modified in ability-based situations. Music area courses are conducted with the "whole" student in mind; opportunities for leadership, independence, responsibility, time management and social adaptation growth are at the core of curriculum, and in turn, grading. Wherever possible, attainment-based grading falls in line with state and regional level rubrics and performance expectations. While attendance and meaningful participation are part of every course, individual and group growth and achievement also are assigned grades.

MUSIC PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

Choir

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 or 1.0

Prerequisite: None

Description: Choir is recommended for any student who has a love for music and wants to sing. No prior musical background or singing experience is necessary to join. Choir performs a number of musical styles, ranging from classical to popular accompanied repertoire. This ensemble performs several concerts throughout the year, takes part in various competitions at local high schools, and appears at multiple civic and community functions. Basic music theory, musicianship, vocal technique, warm-up exercises, vocal styles/phrasing and vocal patterns all are addressed.

Fine Arts - Music

Concert Band

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 1.0

Prerequisite: Participation in Marching Band and Director's approval

Description: Open to qualified performers and incorporating students from all grade levels, the Concert Band strives for fine musical results and aims to develop each student's overall musical proficiency. With a full schedule of performances during the year, the Concert Band rehearses daily and one evening per week. An emphasis is placed on music reading, counting, tone production, ensemble playing, listening and intonation. Students perform music that they enjoy and from which they can learn, including marches, pop music, ethnic music, and traditional and contemporary band selections. Students are expected to practice outside of rehearsals in order to prepare for class. During the spring semester, the Concert Band may be divided into two separate ensembles based on playing ability, instrumentation and a first-semester audition.

Symphonic Band Honors

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 (Spring only) - Honors credit

Prerequisite: Participation in Marching Band and Director's approval

Description: The Symphonic Band includes a select group of dedicated performers from all grade levels who possess strong musical ability and a positive mental attitude. The group lends itself to school and community events in various musical ways. Open to students by audition only, the Symphonic Band rehearses daily and one evening per week, playing material that includes marches, pop music, ethnic music, and traditional and contemporary band selections. Because they play the highest caliber of music, students participating in the Symphonic Band are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. Students are expected to practice outside of rehearsals in order to prepare for class. All music performed by the Symphonic Band is of college-level difficulty.

Marching Band

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 (Fall only)

Prerequisite: Participation in Concert Band and Director's approval

Description: The Marching Band is composed of instrumental students from the Concert and/or Symphonic Bands and color guard members. Open to qualified performers, it rehearses daily and one evening per week. The Marching Band performs at athletic events, school assemblies and other civic functions throughout the year, and also competes during both the fall and spring semesters. It performs music coordinated to moving drill forms that accentuate the music visually, so that an audience can both see and hear that the music being performed. Varying techniques for marching and performing music are introduced. An emphasis is placed upon tone production and technique, as well as the proper method of marching, body carriage, step size and the use of equipment to perform the marching show material, which can include marches, pop, half-time music and other traditional or contemporary selections.

Jazz Band

Grades Course Open To: 10-11-12 **Credit:** 1.0

Prerequisite: Participation in Concert Band and Marching Band or Director's approval

Description: Open only to qualified performers who have the Director's approval, the Jazz Band performs intermediate jazz literature in various styles, using proper instrumental techniques within the jazz idiom. The group rehearses daily and performs a number of times throughout the year at concerts, festivals and clinics. Advanced chord structure and scales in all modes are studied in order to assist with improvisation of jazz solos within a given composition. Students refine their skills and play a variety of material, including blues, pop, rock, and intermediate versions of classic and contemporary jazz selections.

Fine Arts - Music

Jazz Band Honors

Grades Course Open To: 10-11-12 **Credit:** 1.0 - Honors credit

Prerequisite: Participation in Concert Band and Director's approval

Description: Open only to select performers who have participated in the Jazz Band or have the Director's approval, the Honors Jazz Band performs and records college-level jazz literature in various styles, using proper instrumental techniques within the jazz idiom. The group rehearses daily and performs a number of times throughout the year at concerts, festivals and clinics. Alternative and complex chord structure and scales in all modes are studied in order to assist with improvisation of jazz solos within a given composition. Students work to perfect their skills and play a variety of advanced material, including blues, pop, rock, and classic and contemporary jazz selections. Members of the Honors Jazz Band receive skills necessary to prepare for college auditions and recording sessions, and may also receive instruction in the small jazz combo setting and extensive jazz sight-reading skills.

Percussion Ensemble

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 per semester (Spring only)

Prerequisite: By audition only

Description: Open to all experienced percussionists, placement in the Percussion Ensemble is determined by a student's audition and the Director's recommendation. In some cases, percussion students may be placed in the Concert or Symphonic Bands. Incorporating both percussion ensemble music and Symphonic/Concert music, the course emphasizes developing technique, exploring the vast work of percussion music and sound, and the individual study of rudiments and exercises recommended by the Percussive Arts Society. Students perform in a variety of festivals, in addition to working with guest conductors. This class may be repeated for credit up to four semesters.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS

AP Music Theory

Grades Course Open To: 10-11-12 **Credit:** 1.0 - weighted for AP

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Music Production I, Concert Band, Marching Band, Jazz Band Honors or Symphonic Band; or consent of Division Chair (after skills placement exam)

Fees: AP Music Theory exam (paid at fall registration)

Description: This course is the equivalent of an introductory college music theory course, and covers topics such as musicianship, theory, musical materials and procedures. Prior to enrolling in the course, students should know to read and write musical notation. Musicianship skills - including dictation and other listening skills - sight-singing and keyboard harmony all are considered an important part of the course. Throughout the course, students develop the ability to recognize, understand and describe basic materials and processes of music that are heard or presented in a score. Development of aural skills is a primary objective, and performance also is also part of the learning process. Students gain understanding of basic concepts and terminology by listening to and performing a wide variety of music. Notational skills, speed and fluency with basic materials are emphasized. **Note:** All students enrolled in this course **must** take the AP Music Theory exam in the spring.

Guitar I

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5

Prerequisite: None

Description: This course is designed for students with any level of guitar experience. Students receive guidance and direction in solving problems related to playing the guitar at a beginning, intermediate or advanced level, learning many of the different styles, skills and techniques required to become a successful guitarist. Areas of concentration include, but are not limited to: correct posture, note reading, tablature reading, aural skills, rhythmic patterns, chord study, finger-picking styles, musical forms, composition, improvisation, and performance experiences.

Fine Arts - Music

Guitar II

Grades Course Open To: 10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 or 1.0

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Guitar I or consent of Division Chair

Description: This course is designed for students with formal training on guitar or for students who have completed Guitar I. Students receive guidance and direction in solving problems related to playing the guitar at an intermediate or advanced level, exploring advanced techniques, styles and skills required to become a successful guitarist. Areas of concentration include, but are not limited to: chord extensions, voicings, treble-clef-to-fretboard mastery (traditional notation), aural skills, rhythmic patterns, composition, improvisation, and performance experiences.

Introduction to Music

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5

Prerequisite: None

Description: This is a general music course for students of all musical and non-musical backgrounds. It caters to the needs of students who do not play a musical instrument but still are interested in learning the basics of music through the use of basic composition and music theory, music technology and recording software programs, singing, and the ukulele, guitar and keyboard.

Music Production I

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5

Prerequisite: None

Description: This course offers students – regardless of their experience or background – an opportunity to learn about popular music styles spanning from jazz to rock, as well as the technologies available to create and record their own music electronically. The study of various genres of music is used to explore the effective elements of sound, songwriting and performance. Students do not need to have a formal music background. The course caters to the needs of students who do not play a musical instrument, but are still interested in learning the basics of music through the use of composition and music theory, music technology and recording software programs, and introductory keyboard, ukulele and singing. Students have the opportunity to produce several examples of guided, self-generated music, making the class suitable and appropriate for all ability levels. The course also allows students to expand their prior knowledge of an instrument, voice, or other creative media.

Music Production II

Grades Course Open To: 9-10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 or 1.0

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Music Production I

Description: This course allows students to individually study and develop the techniques of the production of music and multi-media presentation. Students further develop their music skills by pursuing the study of voice, acoustic or electric guitar, bass or string instrument, synthesizer, acoustics, digital information theory, music history, music literature, music composition and arranging, electronics, public address systems and audio-video equipment. Students generate music and multi-media presentations and are expected to complete a musical portfolio. The instructor works with each student to develop individual goals and ways to accomplish those goals.

Fine Arts - Music

Music Production III

Grades Course Open To: 10-11-12 **Credit:** 0.5 or 1.0

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Music Production II

Description: This course allows students to individually study and perfect the techniques of the production of music and multi-media presentation. Students further develop their skills by pursuing the advanced study of voice, acoustic or electric guitar, bass or string instrument, synthesizer, acoustics, digital information theory, music history, music literature, music composition and arranging, electronics, and audio-video equipment. Students generate music and multi-media presentations and are expected to complete a musical portfolio, using “Garage Band” and/or “Ableton Live 9.” The instructor works with each student to develop individual goals and ways to accomplish those goals.