Northern York County School District

Curriculum Overview

Course: Elementary Orchestra	
Grade Level: 4-5	
Approval Date:	**Length of Time: 1 Year**

Course Description:

Orchestra is an instrumental music ensemble comprised of students playing the violin, viola, and cello. Students learn individual performance skills, as well as group ensemble practice. Elementary orchestra is comprised of first- and second-year students in 4th and 5th grade. The program is divided into two important activities: lessons and full orchestra rehearsals. Lessons are small group instruction times scheduled in 30-minute sessions. Full orchestra rehearsals are for the entire group of musicians and are 30 minutes in length. Each student attends one lesson and one full orchestra rehearsal during each six-day cycle.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

- Demonstrate competent playing technique on the violin, viola, cello, or double bass.
- Perform music with accurate rhythm, pitch, and intonation.
- Develop an artistic and mature tone quality on their instrument.
- Learn to read and interpret musical notation.
- Understand and appreciate orchestral works from various time periods and locations.
- Evaluate and critique individual, group, and professional musical performances.

Related Standards:

National 2014 Music Standards (Ensemble)

- MU:Pr4.1.E.5a Select varied repertoire to study based on interest, music reading skills (where appropriate), an understanding of the structure of the music, context, and the technical skill of the individual or ensemble.
- MU:Pr4.2.E.5a Demonstrate, using music reading skills where appropriate, how knowledge of formal aspects in musical works inform prepared or improvised performances.
- MU:Pr4.3.E.5a Identify expressive qualities in a varied repertoire of music that can be demonstrated through prepared and improvised performances.
- MU:Pr5.3.E.5a Use self-reflection and peer feedback to refine individual and ensemble performances of a varied repertoire of music.
- MU:Pr6.1.E.5a Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music.

Pennsylvania Academic Standards for the Arts and Humanities

- 9.1.5.B Recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts.
- 9.1.5.C Know and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms.

- 9.2.5.C Relate works in the arts to varying styles and genre and to the periods in which they were created (e.g., Bronze Age, Ming Dynasty, Renaissance, Classical, Modern, Post-Modern, Contemporary, Futuristic, others).
- 9.3.3.A Recognize critical processes used in the examination of works in the arts and humanities.
- 9.1.5.H Use and maintain materials, equipment and tools safely at work and performance spaces.

Units:

- Technique
- Pitch and intonation
- Rhythm/notation
- Musical cultures/context
- Musical analysis

Concepts:

- Left hand placement and movement
- Right hand placement and movement
- Music notation reading and application
- Pitch alteration (natural, sharp, accidentals)
- Ensemble blend and timing
- Performance practice/etiquette
- Self-reflection

Competencies:

Students will be able to:

- Establish and maintain correct posture
- Perform correct left hand finger placement
- Perform correct right-hand placement
- Perform pizzicato and arco techniques
- Differentiate bowing directions, techniques, and styles
- Distinguish differences in pitch and rhythm
- Self-assess tone production
- Maintain a study pulse while playing
- Match pulse and rhythm to stay together in an ensemble
- Perform appropriate etiquette for the style and venue of performance
- Evaluate and discuss group performance

Learning Activities:

- Tuning the instrument
- Practicing and performing scales
- Practicing and performing melodic sequences
- Practicing and performing rhythmic sequences
- Combining melodic and rhythmic sequences

Performance Tasks:

- Independent playing assignments
- Group playing assignments
- Group performance through concerts

Other Assessment Measures:

- In-class participation

Textbook/Primary Resource:

- Title: Essential Elements for Strings Book 1. Author: Allen, Gillespie, Tellejohn Hayes, and Higgins
    - Essential Elements Violin
    - Essential Elements Viola
    - Essential Elements Cello
- Print and electronic music that is found in the music department library and additional printed and electronic music that will be purchased for that year.

Supplemental Resource Materials:

- Teacher generated notes and presentations
- Teacher generated activities
- Multi-media resources such as YouTube and Essential Elements Interactive