

Wallenpaupack Area School District
Planned Course Curriculum Guide

Department
Middle School Music

Name of Course
Bell Choir

Course Description:

The Bell Choir provides passionate young musicians with a group setting in which to develop progressive musicianship and ensemble skills through the performance of handbell literature. Students develop music literacy, rhythmic accuracy, independent musical responsibility, and collaborative ensemble skills while learning proper handbell ringing techniques and performance practices. Students rehearse and perform increasingly challenging repertoire while developing the coordination, listening skills, and musical independence necessary for successful handbell performance.

Initial Creation Date (if applicable) and Revision Dates:
September 2, 2026

Wallenpaupack Area School District Curriculum	
COURSE: Bell Choir	GRADE/S: 7th & 8th Grade
UNIT 1: Fall/Winter Concert Repertoire and Foundational Handbell Techniques	TIMEFRAME: 60 minute Tutorial Block – August through December

PA COMMON CORE/NATIONAL STANDARDS: 9.1 9.3 9.4	
UNIT OBJECTIVES (SWBATS): Students will develop basic music reading skills and apply proper handbell ringing techniques to the performance of ensemble repertoire. Students will identify rhythmic and pitch patterns between the music written on the page and what they hear and perform. Students will demonstrate proper handbell handling, ringing, damping, and bell care techniques. Students will perform assigned musical parts with increasing rhythmic accuracy and independence. Students will develop ensemble listening skills while rehearsing and performing handbell repertoire.	
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES: Direct instruction in proper handbell handling, ringing, damping, and care. Individual and ensemble music reading practice. Director-led rehearsal of concert repertoire. Small-group and sectional rehearsal. Listening and analysis of handbell performances. Performance preparation through repeated rehearsal and feedback.	
ASSESSMENTS (Diagnostic/Benchmark/Formative/Summative): • Ongoing diagnostic, benchmark, and formative assessments through director observation. • Individual and ensemble performance assessments. • Concert performance.	
DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (Acceleration/Enrichment): Small-group instruction and individualized teacher support. Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic instructional strategies. Modified or scaffolded musical parts when appropriate. Peer modeling and collaborative rehearsal. Flexible grouping based on student need.	
RESOURCES (Technology Based Resources, Text Resources, etc.): Physical and Digital Sheet Music of Winter Concert Repertoire Handbells and related equipment Concert performance recordings Teacher-created instructional materials	
KEY VOCABULARY: Handbell, handle, clapper, ringing, damping, lift, martellato, shake, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, ensemble	

UNIT 2: Spring Concert Repertoire and Developing Handbell Techniques	TIMEFRAME: 60 minute Tutorial Block – January through June
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PA COMMON CORE/NATIONAL STANDARDS: 9.1 9.3 9.4
UNIT OBJECTIVES (SWBATS): Students will continue to develop music reading skills and apply increasingly advanced handbell techniques to the performance of ensemble repertoire. Students will analyze and perform more complex rhythmic and musical patterns with increasing independence. Students will demonstrate developing control of handbell techniques, articulation, dynamics, and musical expression. Students will perform assigned musical parts accurately while maintaining awareness of the larger ensemble. Students will demonstrate increased independence and responsibility during rehearsal and performance.
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES: Continued direct instruction and modeling of developing handbell techniques. Individual, sectional, and ensemble rehearsal. Director-led analysis of increasingly complex repertoire. Practice of rhythmic independence, articulation, dynamics, and musical expression. Listening and reflection activities. Performance preparation through rehearsal and feedback.
ASSESSMENTS (Diagnostic/Benchmark/Formative/Summative): • Ongoing diagnostic, benchmark, and formative assessments through director observation. • Individual and ensemble performance assessments. • Concert performance.
DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (Acceleration/Enrichment): Small-group instruction and individualized teacher support. Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic instructional strategies. Modified or scaffolded musical parts when appropriate. Peer modeling and collaborative rehearsal. Flexible grouping based on student need.
RESOURCES (Technology Based Resources, Text Resources, etc.): Physical and Digital Sheet Music of Spring Concert Repertoire Handbells and related equipment Concert performance recordings Teacher-created instructional materials
KEY VOCABULARY: Articulation, dynamics, expression, tempo, coordination, technique, damping, ringing, ensemble precision, musical independence