

DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Choral Music Curriculum **Grades 6-12**

DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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SECTION I - Course Information

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Music is an art form based on creating, performing and responding where one's enjoyment increases exponentially with one's understanding.

Music offers unique learning opportunities to explore individual creativity, artistic expression and a more in-depth understanding of past and present cultures in our diverse world community.

A comprehensive music education will enable students to make more informed choices, develop their musical abilities through self-discipline and focus and will provide a vehicle to increase their confidence in learning across the entire curriculum.

We believe that all students should have a comprehensive, balanced, sequential curriculum of in-school instruction in music education in accordance with national, state and local standards, and that an education in music and the arts will develop the life-long learning abilities and aesthetic skills necessary to improve the quality of life in a more cultured, educated society.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Darien Public Schools Music Department Curriculum directly reflects the National Standards for Arts Education that was released as part of the *"Goals 2000: Educate America Act"*. We have subsequently adopted the nine, ten in the K-5 curriculum, standards as our departmental goals and have incorporated them into the K-12 Music program.

Upon graduation from the Darien Public Schools the students who study music should be able to demonstrate skills and knowledge in each of the following content standards.

- Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments
- Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines
- Reading and notating music
- Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
- Evaluating music and music performances
- Understanding relationships between music, the other arts and disciplines outside the arts
- Understanding music in relation to history and culture
- Identify and perform movement elements and dance skills as they relate to music. (K-5 only)

Music Department Curriculum Map

<u>General Music</u>													
Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Classroom General Music						Guitar	Keyboard	Music Technology		Music Technology			
										Music Theory/ AP Theory			
										American Musical Experience*			

<u>Instrumental Music</u>													
Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Strings -----						Orchestra			Orchestra				
Band						Grade Level Bands			Band				
						(Jazz Ensemble)			Jazz Ensemble				
						(Contemporary String Ensemble)							

<u>Choral Music</u>													
Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
(Chorus)						Grade Level Chorus			Concert Choir				
						(Camerata Singers)			Tudor Singers				
									Nutmeg Express/Jazz Choir				

(Parenthesis indicate a non-credit course offering)

* indicates instruction delivered online

Purpose

The study of choral music enriches the social, emotional, aesthetic, intellectual and creative musical development of students. Participation in a choral ensemble reinforces and promotes good study habits, teamwork, responsibility, positive self-esteem and contributes beneficially to the school and greater community culture.

The comprehensive choral program should provide an understanding of the basic properties of melody, rhythm, harmony and form that is presented in a sequential course of study. Students should be exposed to a variety of experiences in performing, creating and responding to all styles of music.

This document will provide a sequential comprehensive program of choral music instruction for intermediate, secondary and advanced secondary level students. The outcomes contained herein cover appropriate areas of music knowledge, technical proficiency and performance skills, critical evaluation and aesthetic awareness. School choral music instruction is interactive in nature and has at its core the study and performance of quality music from a wide variety of styles and compositional periods.

Choral Music Program Description

The Choral Music program in grades 6-12 is based on curricular Chorus offerings that are selected as electives by the students. A music elective is required at the Middle School level and chorus is one of four music options that students may choose. The study of music and choral music at the high school level is strictly optional, although one credit in the Fine or Practical Arts is required for graduation.

Although vocal music is an integral part of the Elementary General Music Curriculum, the official Elementary School chorus is an ensemble that is open to all interested fourth and fifth grade students and meets regularly before school hours. Being a non-curricular offering, there is no official curriculum.

Chorus on the Middle School level (6-8) consists of grade level choruses that meet as scheduled classes two times per week. (two 45-minute classes) Each chorus is grouped into two or three smaller sections for the purposes of scheduling and then they are combined for performances. The Camerata Singers is an auditioned, (7-8) mixed ensemble that meets before regularly scheduled school hours and performs a more challenging repertoire of literature.

All middle school ensembles have a minimum of two formal concerts each year.

The study of Choral Music at the high school level (9-12) is designed to provide interested students with opportunities to develop their vocal skills. Concert Choir meets daily and is open to all students in grades 9-12 and is scheduled over various sections throughout the day. The Tudor Singers primarily concentrate on 16th century vocal music and the Nutmeg Express concentrates on the popular music genre. Both ensembles are auditioned, meet during the school day and include evening rehearsal obligations. A vocal class is offered as an independent study course for ensemble members who are interested in improving their vocal technique. All high school ensembles have a minimum of three formal public concerts per school year.

Essential Questions

- How does the study of music provide essential ways to understand and express life experiences?
- How does the study of music develop deeper understandings of past and present cultures and prepare students for active participation in creating culture of the present and future?
- How does music develop imagination and creativity and help students to develop the full range of their abilities?
- How does music enable students to make informed aesthetic choices and prepare them for enjoyable recreation and leisure time?
- How does participation in music develop self-discipline and focus and develop the capacity to refine work and aspire to high quality standards?

Process Skills

In order to have a meaningful learning experience in music, students must be consistently actively engaged in the following learning behaviors:

- Singing
- Performing
- Listening
- Evaluating
- Comparing and Describing
- Creating
- Imagining
- Improvising
- Notating
- Exploring
- Analyzing
- Interpreting
- Expressing
- Composing
- Memorizing
- Identifying
- Reflecting
- Modeling
- Pretending
- Responding
- Imitating
- Writing
- Decoding
- Reading

Assessment Overview

I. General Information

Opportunities for assessment are provided within each of the instructional goals and objectives in the Music Curriculum document. A series of well-designed instructional activities typically address more than one standard. While it is often desirable to break instruction into smaller specific skills or knowledge areas, the most interesting and effective instruction recognizes the fact that many of our musical goals and achievement standards are interrelated. Although each musical lesson/task requires students to apply learning from many different musical content standards, only those standards that are assessable are listed in this document.

Opportunities for assessment grow naturally out of well-designed sequences of instruction and are "embedded" in the lesson, rather than occurring as add-ons after the end of each sequence. Assessments in music education should be a process of designing the learning process so that we can measure or observe what the students have learned, provide meaningful feedback to students so that they can improve their skills and subsequently refine our own instructional methods to result in improved student learning.

Types and areas of assessment may include:

- Performance: Singing
- Performance: Playing of instruments
- Performance: Reading notation
- Creating: Composing and improvising
- Oral/Verbal responses to teacher questions
- Informal observations of student musical responses
- Written tests, quizzes and responses
- Self-assessment, peer assessment, student reflection

Formal Assessment:

- Criteria is known to the students
- Specific tasks and results are recorded

Informal Assessment:

- Criteria may not be known to students
- General observation of discussions, questioning and musical performance and is not necessarily recorded.

Common types of Scoring Scales:

- Checklists
- Rating Scales
- Analytic Rubrics
- Holistic Rubrics

Grading Guidelines:

In grades 6-12 students receive a letter grade in Choral Music each quarter that is based on the accomplishments of grade level curricular criteria established by the teacher in conjunction with the objectives listed in this document.

SECTION II - Curricular Goals and Objectives

GRADE 6

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Students will:

- a. Sing independently, demonstrating good posture and correct breath control.
- b. Sing alone and in small and large ensembles demonstrating independence in executing his/her own part.
- c. Perform melodies and rhythms with appropriate dynamics while maintaining a steady tempo.
- d. Understand and identify basic conducting beats and gestures including: preparatory beats, releases, tempo changes, entrance cues, dynamic and other expressive gestures.
- e. Perform music of a variety of styles and cultures using expression and phrasing appropriate for the work being performed.
- f. Understand and be able to perform with others to achieve a refined ensemble sound including blend, balance and timbre.
- g. Perform accurately and expressively two and three part music.
- h. Perform music in a variety of meters to include 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4.
- i. Demonstrate appropriate care of his/her vocal mechanism.
- j. Demonstrate correct choral vowels and consonants.

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Students will:

- a. Perform independent instrumental parts while other students sing or play contrasting parts.

- b. Perform percussion instruments within groups, blending timbres, balancing dynamic levels and responding to the cues of a conductor.

3. Improvising melodies, variations and accompaniments

Students will:

- a. Improvise responses (answers) to given rhythmic and melodic phrases using up to sixteenth note rhythms in duple and triple meter.
- b. Improvise simple melodies utilizing “scat” syllables and embellishments.
- c. Improvise simple variations and rhythmic accompaniments to given musical phrases/melodies.
- d. Improvise short melodies consistent with style, meter and tonality of a given accompaniment.

4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

Students will:

- a. Complete a simple melody applying given meter, rhythms and notes.
- b. Compose simple melodies making appropriate rhythmic and melodic choices within stated guidelines. (see #5 reading and Notating)
- c. Compose variations to a simple melodic or rhythmic phrase or melody. (within specified guidelines, some of which are listed in #5 Reading and Notating Music.)

5. Reading and notating music

Students will:

- a. Identify all pitches within the clef and appropriate to his/her range.
- b. Read and be able to perform the following rhythms and their equivalent rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, 6/8: whole note, dotted half note, half note, quarter note and eighth note.

- c. Identify and describe time signatures by the number of beats per measure and the unit of beat including: 2/4,3/4,4/4,2/2,6/8.
- d. Sight read simple melodies in key of C utilizing solfege syllables.
- e. Identify key signatures of pieces currently in use.
- f. Identify and perform and interpret the following dynamic markings: pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff, crescendo and decrescendo in studied repertoire.
- g. Understand and perform the following articulations: legato, staccato, ties and slurs.
- h. Interpret and perform the following musical directions: repeats, 1st and 2nd endings, D.C. and D.S. indications and multiple measure rests.

6. Listening to, analyzing and describing music

Students will:

- a. Define musical terms used in ensemble or solo music being studied.
- b. Identify and interpret melody, harmony, timbre and form in varied genres and styles using appropriate terminology.
- c. Identify key changes as they occur in a musical composition.
- d. Describe with appropriate terminology what is happening in a musical example being listened to: (i.e. dynamics, meter, entrances of voice parts, tempo or mood changes.)
- e. Identify and describe styles of music representing various cultures and periods of music.
- f. Identify and describe the four major voice classifications: soprano, alto, tenor and bass.

7. Evaluating music and music performances

Students will:

- a. Evaluate musical performances and composition utilizing established criteria and offer suggestions for improvement.
- b. Explain their preferences for specific musical styles and performances using appropriate terminology.
- c. Evaluate rhythmic accuracy in performance of these meters: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/2, 6/8.
- d. Evaluate accuracy with respect to rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo, form, harmony and melody, tone quality, balance and blend.

8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Students will:

- a. Compare and contrast the use of common elements (dominance, balance, repetition, contrast, etc.) in other works of art (painting, sculpture, theatre, dance, etc.)
- b. Contribute music to interdisciplinary projects with other subjects when and where appropriate.

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Students will:

- a. Identify social, historical and cultural events and practices as they relate to music being studied.
- b. Analyze music in terms of appropriate historical performance practices and compare and contrast to practices of other periods and/or styles and cultures.
- c. Perform, respond and listen to music from a variety of cultures and periods.

GRADE 7 - 8

1. Singing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Students will:

- a. Sing independently, demonstrating good posture and correct breath control.
- b. Sing alone and in small and large ensembles demonstrating independence in executing his/her own part.
- c. Perform melodies and rhythms with appropriate dynamics while maintaining a steady tempo.
- d. Understand and identify basic conducting beats and gestures including: preparatory beats, releases, tempo changes, entrance cues, dynamic and other expressive gestures.
- e. Perform music of a variety of styles and cultures using expression and phrasing appropriate for the work being performed.
- f. Understand and be able to perform with others to achieve a refined ensemble sound including blend, balance and timbre.
- g. Perform accurately and expressively unison, two and three-part music.
- h. Perform music in the following meters: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/8, 6/8, 2/2
- i. Demonstrate appropriate care of his/her vocal mechanism.
- j. Demonstrate correct choral vowels and consonants.
- k. Perform music in different tonalities (including but not limited to major, minor and modal)

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Students will:

- a. Perform independent instrumental parts while other students sing or perform contrasting parts.
- b. Perform percussion instruments within ensembles, blending

timbres, balancing dynamic levels, demonstrating the proper performance techniques and responding to the cues of the conductor.

3. Improvising melodies, variations and accompaniments

Students will:

- a. Improvise responses (answers) to given rhythmic and melodic phrases using up to sixteenth note rhythms in duple and triple meter.
- b. Improvise simple melodic phrases and solos utilizing “scat” syllables and typical stylistic embellishments such as turns, falls, slides and glissando.
- c. Improvise simple harmonic and rhythmic accompaniments to given musical phrases/melodies. (I IV V chords in a given key)
- d. Improvise short melodies to a given accompaniment with proper style, phrasing, meter and tonality.

4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

Students will:

- a. Compose simple melodies making appropriate rhythmic and melodic choices within stated guidelines (see #5 Reading and Notating Music for some related specified guidelines)
- b. Compose rhythmic variations to a familiar melody.
- c. Compose a bass line or harmony to a given melody and chord progression.

5. Reading and notating music

Students will:

- a. Identify all pitches within the clef and appropriate to his/her range.
- b. Read and be able to perform the following note values and their corresponding rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/8, 6/8, 2/2: whole, half, quarter, eighth and dotted half and quarter notes.
- c. Identify and describe time signatures by the number of beats per measure and the unit of beat including: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/8, 6/8, 2/2.

- d. Sight read simple stepwise melodies in key of C, F and G utilizing solfege syllables, which may include a triadic leap.
- a. Identify major key signatures of repertoire currently in use.
- b. Identify and perform the dynamic markings from repertoire currently in use (including but not limited to: pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff, crescendo & decrescendo.)
- c. Interpret and perform tempo markings from repertoire currently in use (including but not limited to: accelerando, ritardando allegro, moderato, adagio, largo).
- d. Understand and perform the following articulations from repertoire currently in use: legato, staccato, marcato, tenuto, slurs.
- e. Interpret and perform musical score directions from repertoire currently in use (including but not limited to: repeat signs, 1st & 2nd endings, D. C. and D.S. indications and multiple measure rests.

6. Listening to, analyzing and describing music

Students will:

- a. Define musical terms used in ensemble or solo music being studied.
- b. Describe with appropriate terminology what is happening in a musical example being listened to: (including, but not limited to: dynamics, melody, harmony, form, meter, entrances of voice parts, tempo or mood changes.)
- c. Recognize key changes visually and aurally.
- d. Identify and describe styles of music representing various cultures and periods of music.
- e. Identify and describe the four major voice classifications: soprano, alto, tenor and bass.

7. Evaluating music and music performances

Students will:

- a. Evaluate musical performances utilizing established criteria (including, but not limited to: rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo, form, harmony, melody, timbre, balance, blend entrances and cutoffs, concentration) and offer suggestions for improvement.
- b. Explain their preferences for specific musical styles and performances using appropriate terminology.

8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Students will:

- a. Compare and contrast the use of common elements (including, but not limited to dominance, balance, repetition, contrast, etc.) in other works of art (architecture, painting, sculpture, theatre, dance and literature).
- b. Contribute music to interdisciplinary projects with other subjects when and where appropriate.

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Students will:

- a. Identify social, historical and cultural events and practices as they relate to music being studied.
- b. Analyze pieces in terms of appropriate historical performance practices and compare and contrast to practices of other historical periods and/or styles and cultures.
- c. Perform, respond and listen to music from a variety of cultures and periods.

GRADE 9-12

1. Singing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Students will:

- a. Sing independently, demonstrating good posture and correct breath control.
- b. Sing alone and in small and large ensembles demonstrating independence in executing his/her own part.
- c. Perform melodies and rhythms with appropriate dynamics while maintaining a steady tempo.
- d. Understand and identify basic conducting beats and gestures including: preparatory beats, attacks, releases, tempo changes, entrance cues, dynamic and other expressive gestures.
- e. Perform music of a variety of styles and cultures using expression, phrasing and timbre appropriate for the work being performed.
- f. Understand and be able to perform with others to achieve a refined ensemble sound including blend, balance and timbre.
- g. Perform accurately and expressively three, four, five and eight part music.
- h. Perform music in the following meters: Duple: 2/2, 2/4, 2/8; Triple: 3/2, $\frac{3}{4}$, 3/8; Quadruple: 4/2, 4/4, 4/8; Compound Duple: 6/2, 6/4, 6/8; Compound Triple: 9/4, 9/8; Compound Quadruple: 12/4, 12/8, 12/16; Compound Quintuple: 5/4; Compound Septuple: 7/4.
- i. Demonstrate appropriate care of his/her vocal mechanism.
- j. Demonstrate correct choral vowels and consonants.
- k. Perform music in different tonalities (including but not limited to major, minor, modal, atonal and polytonal)

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Students will:

- a. Perform independent instrumental parts while other students sing or perform contrasting parts.
- b. Perform a simple melody or choral excerpt at a keyboard instrument demonstrating correct tempo, style, dynamics and notes.
- c. Perform percussion instruments accompanying the ensemble, blending timbres, balancing dynamic levels demonstrating proper performance technique and responding to the cues of the conductor.

3. Improvising melodies, variations and accompaniments

Students will:

- a. Improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on a given pentatonic melody and melodies in major and minor keys. The improvisation will consist largely of simple ornamentation, (e.g., trills, turns, mordents, passing tones) of the original melody.
- b. Improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing accompaniment parts and or a bass line using at least three different chords.
- c. Improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter and tonality with the accompaniment. (The student is asked to improvise a melody to a twelve-bar blues or another given progression.)

4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

Students will:

- a. Compose melodies in a specified musical style making the appropriate rhythmic, melodic and harmonic choices within stated guidelines. (see #5 Reading and Notating Music)
- b. Compose and perform rhythmic variations to a given melody.
- c. Compose and perform harmonies to a given melody and chord progression consisting of a bass line and/or 2, 3 and 4 part chords.

5. Reading and notating music

Students will:

- a. Identify all pitches within the clef and appropriate to his/her range.
- a. Read and be able to perform the following rhythms, dotted rhythms and their equivalent rests in 2/2, 2/4, 4/4, 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8; whole note, half note, quarter note, eighth note, sixteenth note, thirty-second note, dotted half note, dotted quarter note, dotted eighth note, dotted sixteenth note, dotted thirty-second note.
- b. Identify and describe time signatures by the number of beats per measure and the unit of beat including: 2/2, 2/4, 2/8, 3/2, $\frac{3}{4}$, 3/8, 4/2, 4/4, 4/8, 6/2, 6/4, 6/8, 7/4, 9/4, 9/8, 12/4, 12/8, 12/18.
- c. Sight-read melodies in major and minor keys, utilizing sol fege syllables, which may include triadic or intervallic leaps.
- d. Identify major or minor key signatures of repertoire currently in use.
- e. Identify and perform the dynamic markings from repertoire currently in use (including but not limited to: pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff, crescendo & decrescendo sfz, sfzp cresc., fp.)
- f. Interpret and perform tempo markings from repertoire currently in use (including but not limited to: Largo, Lento, Adagio, Andante, Moderato, Allegretto, Allegro, Presto, Prestissimo, Accelerando, Ritardando, Rubato).
- g. Understand and perform the following articulations from repertoire currently in use: legato, staccato, marcato, tenuto, slurs, appropriate articulation, variety of attack, subtle crescendo/decrescendo.
- h. Interpret and perform musical score directions from repertoire currently in use (including but not limited to: repeat signs, 1st & 2nd endings, D.C., D.S. indications, multiple measure rests, coda, D.C. Al Fine.)

6. Listening to, analyzing and describing music

Students will:

- a.** Analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices. The student is able to make one relevant and accurate observation, concerning three of the following characteristics: medium, form, melody, rhythm, harmony or texture, and expressive devices, for one of the works.
- b.** Demonstrate knowledge and application of the technical vocabulary of music. The students can define and explain a minimum of fifty specified terms and symbols commonly used in music. (lists to be included in the appendices)
- c.** Identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety and tension and release and form in a musical work.

7. Evaluating music and music performances

Students will:

- a.** Evaluate verbally and in writing to the technical qualities of a performance, the expressive or musical qualities of a performance and the overall effect of the performance.
- b.** Compare a musical performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation to similar or exemplary models. Criteria will utilize specific music terminology based on the elements of music (melody, harmony, form, rhythm/meter)
- c.** Evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain the musical means it uses to evoke feelings and emotions. The student is able to comment on the aesthetic meaning of the work, the musical means by which the work conveys feeling, emotion and aesthetic meaning.

8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Students will:

- a.** Compare and contrast elements, artistic processes and organizational principles that are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts using examples of balance, unity and variety, repetition and contrast. (architecture, visual arts (painting), sculpture, theater, dance and literature)
- b.** Compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style.
- c.** Explore how the roles of creators, performers and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another in the various arts.

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Students will:

- a.** Classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture, unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications
- b.** Identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres and cite well-known musicians associated with them.
- c.** Identify various roles that musicians perform in various cultures, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role and describe their activities and achievements.
- d.** Perform, respond to, identify and recreate the historically significant music of various cultures.

Darien High School Choral Repertoire Cycle

YEAR 1

RENAISSANCE, BAROQUE, PATRIOTIC

YEAR 2

CLASSICAL, FOLK, JAZZ, BLUES

YEAR 3

ROMANTIC, BROADWAY, MULTICULTURAL

YEAR 4

CONTEMPORARY, POPULAR, PROGRAM MUSIC
(NEW COMPOSERS)

This cycle represents one focus area of repertoire that students will study in each year that they participate in Chorus at the High School level. The students will be engaged in one in-depth unit or topic built around a selected composition, composer or theme.

